

While nobody’s looking, clearcutting devastates Sierra forests p11

No more compromise on health-care reform p5

GUARDIAN

SEPTEMBER 9 - 15, 2009 THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN SFBG.COM VOL. 43, NO. 50 FREE



The boys from Girls

California rock goes pop
— and reaches timelessness. p20

Christopher Owns and Chet “JR” White created Girls with guitarist John Anderson and drummer Garrett Godard.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY SPENCER HANSEN

EDITOR'S NOTES

By Tim Redmond
Tredmond@sfbg.com

Every poor and working class community in San Francisco has learned the hard way that its interests are at the bottom of the list as far as City Hall is concerned. At the top of the list are the banks, real estate interests, and large corporations, who view San Francisco not as a place for people to live and work and raise families, but as a corporate headquarters city and playground for corporate executives. By using their vast financial resources, they have been able to persuade local government officials that office buildings, hotels, and luxury apartments are more important than blue-collar industry, low-cost housing and decent public services and facilities.

Sound familiar?

It's more than 30 years old. Back in 1974, more than 50 San Francisco community groups — from Bay Area Gay Liberation to the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center, from the Federation of Ingleside Neighbors to the San Quentin Six Defense Committee, from the Golden Gate Business and Civic Women's Association to the Socialist Coalition — started meeting to develop a plan to take back the city.

It culminated with a Community Congress, on June 8, 1975, at Lone Mountain College (now part of the University of San Francisco). More than 1,000 people attended, and they drafted a remarkable 40-page document that outlined an alternative political, economic, social, and environmental agenda for San Francisco. The movement led, among other things, to the advent of district elections of supervisors (a key element in the platform) and the rise of active community-based organizations in this city.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 5 »

EDITORIALS 5	NEWS + CULTURE 8	PICKS 14	VISUAL ART 41	FOOD + DRINK 44	CLASSIFIEDS 55
LETTERS 5	GREEN CITY 11	MUSIC 20	STAGE 42	FILM 47	ALT.SEX.COLUMN 59

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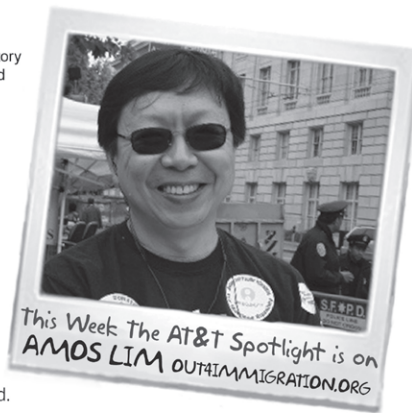
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Log on to www.out4immigration.org today to learn more about this organization. amos lim has been selected as this week's AT&T Spotlight community hero and AT&T is going to donate \$500 to his organization.

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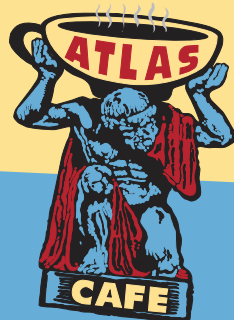
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Image: VidyA, photo by Nate Keck.

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CELEBRATE the de Young's fourth year of collaboration with **Intersection for the Arts: Jazz at Intersection**. VidyA opens the series with music that merges the virtuosity of jazz with the melodic and rhythmic nuance of South Indian classical (carnatic) music.

EXPERIENCE **An Evening of the New Talkies (neo-benshi)**, with live film narration introduced by Konrad Steiner. Neo-benshi is the art of re-narrating scenes to films with the sound muted. This is in collaboration with the de Young Poetry Series, curated by Paul Hoover, Poet, Editor and Professor of Creative Writing at SFSU. Separate ticket required; purchase tickets for poetry series at the museum box office or at deyoungmuseum.org.

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Friday Nights at the de Young is supported by the Koret Foundation. Friday Nights at the de Young is part of FAMSf's Cultural Encounters initiative generously funded by The James Irvine Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Columbia Foundation, and the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation.



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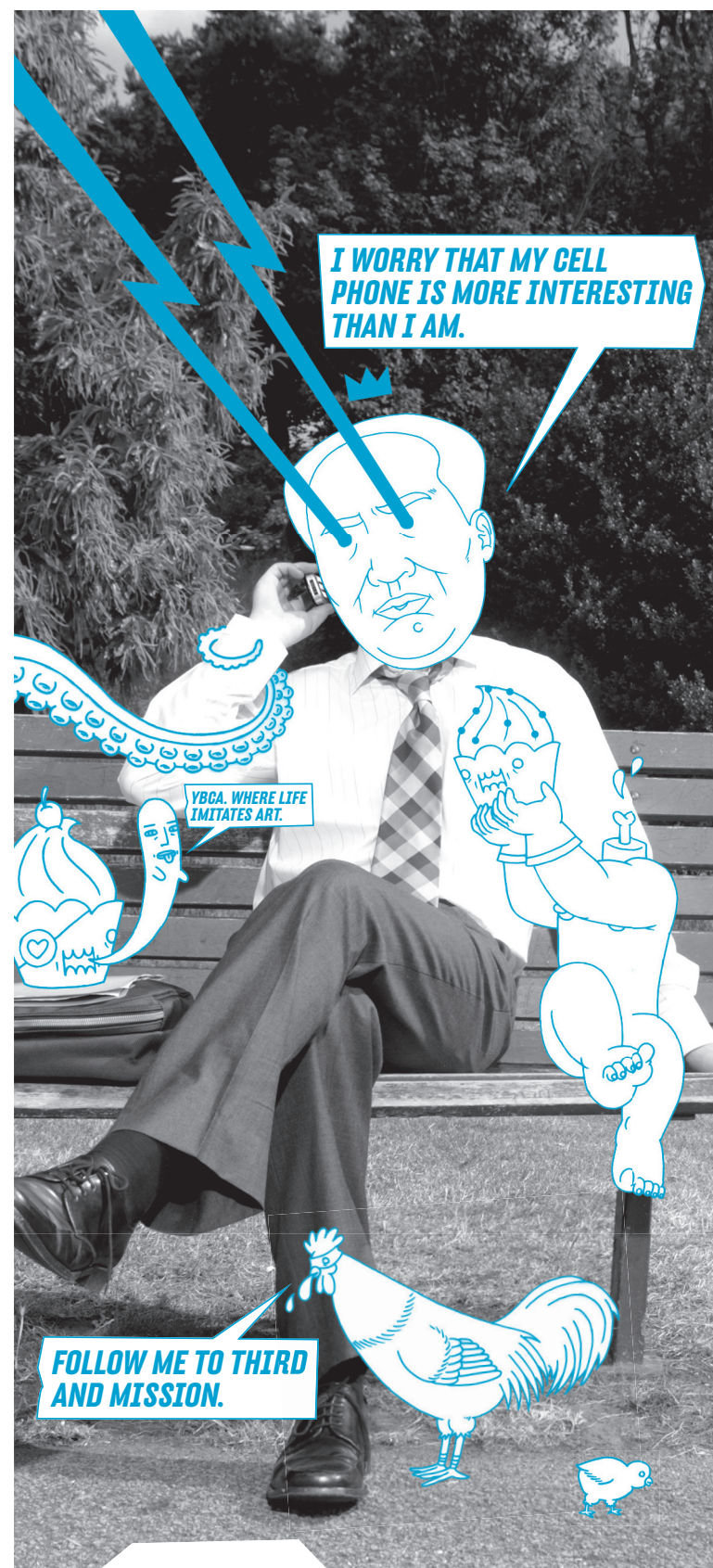
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Republicans will scream “socialized medicine” on behalf of insurance companies no matter what is in this reform package.

EDITOR'S NOTES

CONT>>

Calvin Welch and Rene Cazenave, the veteran activists who run the San Francisco Information Clearinghouse, were among the organizers. They found the old manifesto recently and sent it out to a few of us by e-mail. I've posted it at sfbg.com. It calls for rent control, a sunshine ordinance, a health commission, full-time supervisors (who were to be paid \$20,000 a year, the equivalent of \$86,000 today), cable-TV coverage of the supervisors meetings, a mandate that developers build affordable housing and a feasibility study on public power. In fact, much of what the left has achieved in San Francisco in the past three decades is outlined in the Community Congress document.

(The congress also called for decriminalization of victimless crimes, including public inebriation, a guaranteed annual income, the abolition of the criminal grand jury, and some other things that didn't quite come to pass.)

I mention this not only because it's a fascinating historical document but because Welch and Cazenave think it's time for a new Community Congress. Their draft agenda refers to a New Deal for San Francisco, and they're talking about holding a series of meetings culminating in a major session sometime next year.

It's tough to get the San Francisco left to come together on issues, even harder to build a broad-based organization that can push an agenda. Sup. Chris Daly tried several years ago, but the San Francisco People's Organization never got the traction many of us had hoped for.

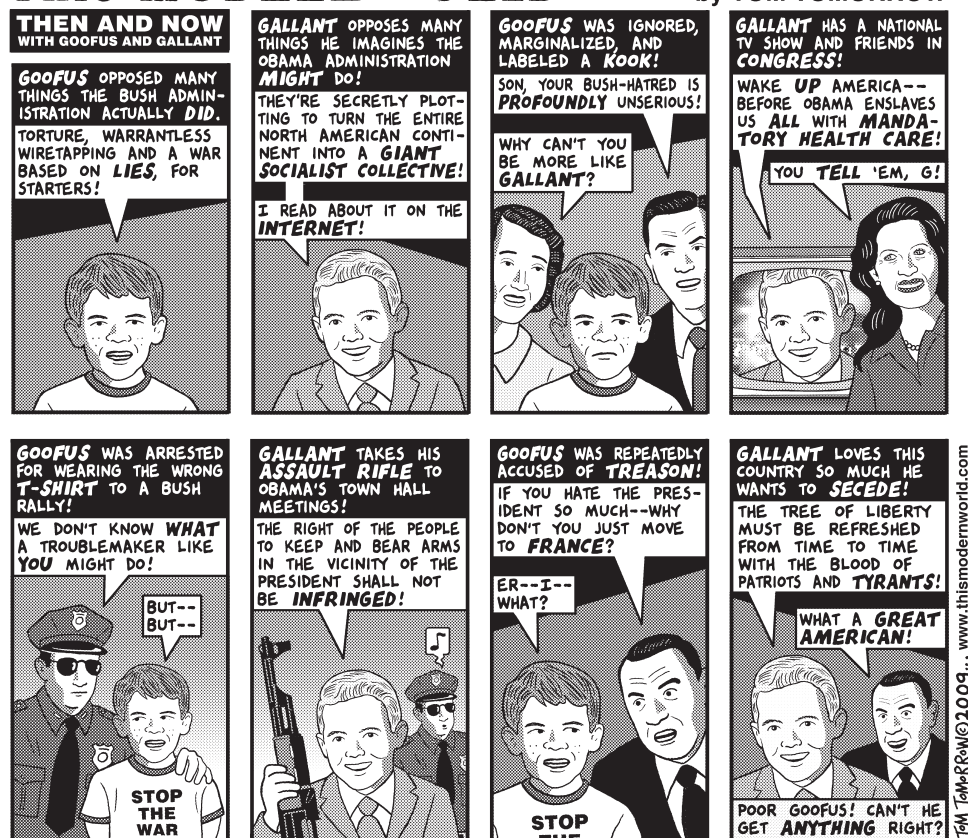
But although the progressives have accomplished a tremendous amount in this city, and have come a long way since 1975, the need is still there.

That was then. Today, Welch and Cazenave write, “San Francisco stands at a crucial junction brought about by the collapse of the real estate based speculative bubble and the related steep reduction of city revenue resulting in cuts in funding important programs and services ... There needs to be a general coming together of community groups to articulate a set

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 >>

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



On health care, just win

EDITORIAL This could very well be the pivotal moment in Barack Obama's presidency. If he loses on health care reform — or worse, if he caves in to right-wing bullying tactics and abandons a strong public option — then not only will the American people and economy suffer, but Obama will have hobbled his ability to effectively address the myriad problems facing this country.

The time for negotiating with Republicans on health care is over. They have proven to be hostile and irrational obstructionists interested only in sabotaging both Obama and health care reform, repeatedly telling lies to incite anger and fear in the populace. Beyond being irresponsible, they have abandoned their role as good-faith participants in the political process.

Even when U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius suggested on Aug. 16 that private co-ops might be an acceptable alternative to the public plan — a tactical and policy mistake that

understandably outraged progressives — Republicans refused to come back to the bargaining table.

With that gesture, Republicans showed that their overheated denunciations of the public option were simply a political ploy. They will scream “socialized medicine” on behalf of insurance companies no matter what is in this reform package, so Obama and the Democrats need to ignore them, develop the strongest possible plan, and do whatever it takes to get it through Congress this fall, even when that means stretching procedural rules to require only a bare majority vote for the most controversial elements.

The Democrats have already compromised enough. As the *Guardian* has said (“It's the insurance companies, stupid,” 7/22/09), a single-payer system is the only reform that will bring the cost savings this country (and its residents and businesses) desperately needs. Democrats were foolish to abandon that so early, a decision that emboldened conserva-

tives and insurance industry shills in both parties and led to the current standoff.

So if Obama and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi are right that starting over on health care reform would cause the moment of possibility to be lost — and we aren't sure they're right, although we understand the point — then they need to get tough and push through their plan without letting it get watered down any more.

Despite the over-amplification of right-wing talking points, the political winds have shifted in this country. Progressives are ascendant and they expect fundamental reforms. Pelosi (to her credit) acknowledged as much in August when she said that health reform bill without a strong public option wouldn't be approved by the House.

That's because the House Progressive Caucus, led by Rep. Lynn Woolsey from Petaluma, now has more members than the conservative Blue Dog Coalition, 81 to 52. It's not the 1990s anymore, when then-President Bill Clinton felt he had to

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 >>

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LETTERS

KOPP ON NEWSOM'S LEAK

I am flabbergasted by your caterwauling over public disclosure of an opinion presumably prepared at taxpayer expense by City Attorney Dennis Herrera about supposed legal implications of an ordinance dubbed as “sanctuary legislation” (“Newsom's leak,” 8/26/09). You condemn its exposure to the public by the post-pubescent mayor as a breach of the attorney-client privilege. Your quaint indignation over mayoral “leaking of a confidential memo” represents the ultimate in hypocrisy. I carried successfully for the public open meeting law legislation. I carried public-record access legislation. You endorsed the bills. After then-Attorney General John Van de Kamp claimed attorney-client privilege allowed him to conceal a legal opinion from his staff that the 1990 Proposition 116 (crime victims initiative) did *not* jeopardize California's abortion-rights law, which Van de Kamp used as a crutch to oppose the crime-victim initiative, I sued to redress Van de Kamp's refusal to produce such legal opinion from his staff, then sponsored a bill to specify that the *public* is a public attorney's client, not the boss or a governor or a mayor or a legislator.

You supported that bill. It failed. It is, nevertheless, still the truth. Your whining about the mayor's release of an opinion produced at taxpayer cost demonstrates an opportunistic betrayal of once-respected principles. Shame, shame!

Quentin L. Kopp
San Francisco

EXECUTIVE EDITOR TIM REDMOND RESPONDS:

We believe Judge Kopp is giving Mayor Newsom too much credit here: Newsom didn't *release* the memo, which would have allowed anyone to review it. He gave it to one news outlet, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which then wrote a misleading and overblown story designed to torpedo the sanctuary bill. If Newsom had

CONTINUES ON PAGE 6 >>

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EDITOR'S NOTES

CONT>>

of policies able to be implemented at the local level which seek to maximize community control over the provision of critically needed health and human services and beneficial community development and to maintain a vital public sector."

Sounds like a plan. **SFBG**

HEALTH CARE

CONT>>

compromise with the emerging right wing to get anything done. Now Democrats finally need to acknowledge progressives and enlist their help in moving a bold reform agenda.

Today, the Republicans have been thoroughly discredited, but the Democratic Party is its own worst enemy. The people who gave the Democrats substantially congressional majorities expect action, and if the Democrats can't toughen up and deliver, this country is headed for a real political crisis that could easily spin out of control.

Obama and Pelosi need to seize the moment and pass a health reform bill that includes a robust public option and explicitly allows states like California to experiment with single-payer systems, which is the only system that will truly hold down health care costs and drive a stake through the heart of the insurance industry, which is ruining not just the health care system, but the political system as well. **SFBG**

LETTERS

CONT>>

been showing the same high-minded and public-spirited approach to open government that Judge Kopp espouses, he would have made the document public instead of leaking it privately for his own political purposes (and jeopardizing the city's legal standing in the process).

The *Guardian* welcomes letters commenting on our coverage or other topics of local interest. Letters should be brief (we reserve the right to edit them for length) and signed. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification.

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CALENDAR EDITOR Paula Connelly
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Lawns to highrises

Radical redevelopment for Parkmerced raises the question: What do we do with the suburbs?

By Rebecca Bowe
rebeccab@sfbg.com

When Aaron Goodman walks the grounds at Parkmerced, a sprawling apartment complex spanning about 116 acres in southwestern San Francisco, he picks up on details that might escape the notice of a casual observer. A gregarious tour guide, he chatters on enthusiastically about the unique design elements of an entryway or townhouse facade, the curve of a knee-high brick wall defining the slope of a courtyard, the simple elegance of a tiered planter or classic window frame, or the spacious feel of a breezeway that opens onto shared grassy space encircled by backyard terraces. "No two courtyards are alike," Goodman says. "Each one is like a little vignette."

An architect who lives in a rental unit in one of Parkmerced's towers, Goodman is on a mission to document the complex's 1940s-era courtyard landscapes — but he's racing against the clock. Landscape and carpentry crews are constantly rearranging things before he can get to them, he says — and those piecemeal cosmetic changes are nothing in comparison with what's coming.

A total overhaul has been proposed for Parkmerced. The low-rise town houses would be razed, the landscape drastically altered, and an additional 5,665 housing units constructed, nearly tripling the number of residents that can be accommo-

dated.

Goodman regards the plan as a "total tear-down," an affront to the work of the influential landscape architect who designed the grounds, and a terrible waste.

But Skidmore, Owens and Merrill, the internationally renowned architecture firm hired by the owner, a real-estate investment group called Parkmerced Investors LLC, describes the future Parkmerced as a cutting-edge eco-neighborhood that would provide the city with desperately needed rental housing. "This will be the largest sustainable revitalization project on the West Coast — perhaps in the entire nation," says Craig Hartman, the principal architect. "Our goal is to create an international model of environmentally sustainable urban living, and all our decisions are being made in that context."

A development of this scale would fundamentally change the feel of an entire San Francisco neighborhood. It's also, potentially, a case study in one of the most complex urban planning problems of our time.

"This is the kind of problem that America is going to be faced with over and over in the coming decades," Gabriel Metcalf, executive director of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association, told us. "It's this question of how do we retrofit suburbia?"

Parkmerced is one of many similar areas developed after World

War II, "when people hated cities," Metcalf said, "when the idea was that everybody would drive everywhere, and it was a sort of new town in town. It's a period piece. It's from a time when people were trying to escape density and traditional Victorian patterns like in the Tenderloin or SoMa or North Beach — [instead], you would have big lawns, and it would look very suburban."

But that model, most environmentalists and planner agree, isn't sustainable. And activists say that the western part of the city, which has always resisted density, will have to accept more residents in the coming years.

But a development of this size and magnitude, driven by a profit-seeking real-estate operation, creates all sorts of other problems, including potential traffic disasters on the nightmare called 19th Avenue. And while much of the new housing will be rental and some will be affordable, it raises the question: is this the sort of new housing the city needs?

TOO MUCH WATER

The plans for Parkmerced are bold, and the construction timeline spans 15 to 20 years. The 11 towers on the site, which account for about half the 3,000-unit housing stock, would remain standing, while the low-scale apartment dwellings would be demolished to make way for a mix of taller buildings, including 11 new towers at about the same



The towers at Parkmerced would remain intact under the development plan, which proposes adding nearly 5,700 new units to the apartment complex. | PHOTO BY REBECCA BOWE

height. Once the project is complete, Parkmerced would have a total of nearly 8,900 housing units, with a mix of rental and for-sale properties.

"Our plan for Parkmerced will directly address the city's housing shortage for households at all income levels," Hartman told the *Guardian*, adding that existing rental units would be preserved, and the project would comply with the city's affordable-housing requirements. The city typically requires about 15 percent affordability, which would mean

about 850 new below-market units — and 4,800 at market rate.

And while the complex was originally designed for middle-class families, the owners have been targeting San Francisco State University students — who typically have their parents co-sign the leases and who don't present a rent-control issue, since they don't stay long.

Sustainability and energy-efficiency are underpinnings of the project, according to Hartman. The

CONTINUES ON PAGE 10 »



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“There are a lot of models for what it means to be a successful business, but there are fewer for what it means to be a steward of the land.”

Sandy Dean, chairman, Mendocino Redwood Company

ALERTS

By Paula Connelly
alerts@sfbg.com

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9

9/11 Film Festival

This festival, which benefits the Northern California 9/11 Truth Alliance, Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth, and the NYC Coalition for Accountability Now, features films, premieres, and guest speakers addressing the events, politics, and repercussions of 9/11.
Wed., 6:15 p.m.; Thurs., noon; \$10 per day
Grand Lake Theater
3200 Grand, Oakl.
www.communitycurrency.org

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10

Fiery feminist theory

Join in on the conclusion of this Bay Area Radical Women discussion series about how to achieve women's liberation, focusing on anarcho- and socialist feminism. Preceded by a summer buffet with vegetarian options.
7 p.m., free; buffet at 6:15 p.m., \$7.50
New Valencia Hall
625 Larkin, Suite 202, SF
(415) 864-1278

Peace Corps Hour

Have a conversation about the real “flower power” agricultural and environmental skills needed to address global concerns around sustainable agriculture, forestry, desertification, water systems, food security, and much more. Also learn more about becoming a volunteer for the Peace Corps, which operates in more than 70 countries.
6:30 p.m., free
Peace Café at the Red Vic B & B
1665 Haight, SF
510-452-8442

Urban cycling workshop

If you are a new cyclist or just want to feel more comfortable riding on the streets, check out this four-hour in-classroom introductory course on safe cycling filled with tips, techniques, emergency maneuvers, and more. Adults and anyone over 14 welcome. Bring your lunch or dinner. No bicycle needed for this class.
5:30 p.m., free
San Francisco Bike Coalition Office
995 Market, Suite 1550, SF



sfbike.org/edu, registration required

SATURDAY, SEPT. 12

Bike Build 2009

Volunteer for a day of group bike construction and give-a-way for underprivileged San Francisco children challenged by poverty. A BBQ lunch will be served, and the bikes, with helmets, will be presented to the children.
7:30 a.m., free
Mission Creek Park
301 Channel, SF
www.sfratory.com to register as a volunteer

Confer on gender-based violence

The Gender Asylum and Recovery Project, part of Survivors International, has organized this conference to enhance a general understanding of the implications of

gender-based violence on immigration, asylum-seekers, and refugees living in the United States. Featuring speakers, a panel discussion, and performances.
8 a.m., \$15
UC Hastings College of Law
200 McAllister, SF
genderconference.eventbrite.com

Urban composting

Learn backyard and worm composting, turning your leftovers into “black gold” that will simultaneously improve your garden and reduce your ecological footprint.
10 a.m., free
Garden for the Environment
Seventh Ave. at Lawton, SF
(415) 731-5627 to register

SUNDAY, SEPT. 13

Strike out violence

Help sell \$1 raffle tickets for

autographed Giants jerseys (worn in games by actual Giants) at the eighth annual “Jerseys Off Our Game” fundraiser for La Casa de las Madres, San Francisco's oldest domestic violence shelter for women and their children. Includes breakfast, orientation, snack, t-shirt, credentials, and supplies.
9:30 a.m., free
Giants vs. Dodgers
AT&T Park
24 Willie Mays Plaza, SF
Email walesa@lacasa.org to sign up SFBG
Mail items for Alerts to the Guardian Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 255-8762; or e-mail alerts@sfbg.com. Please include a contact telephone number. Items must be received at least one week prior to the publication date. SFBG

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POLITICS

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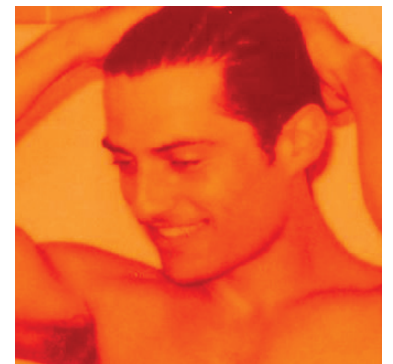
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Park Merced CONT.

poorly insulated garden apartments are moisture-ridden and inefficient, he said, and the entire neighborhood layout reflects the car-centric mentality of a bygone era. The landscape also poses a problem. "Maintaining the expansive lawns ... requires the application of tons of fertilizer and wastes millions of gallons of drinking water annually. In fact, actual metering shows the consumption of 55 million gallons of potable water per year — just for irrigation."

Parkmerced residents would use 60 percent less energy and water per capita than they do now, according to Hartman, through efficiency improvements and investments in renewable energy sources. Plans also call for an organic farm and a network of bike paths. A storm-water management system would naturally filter runoff and use it to recharge Lake Merced, which has been seeping lower in recent years.

The developers hope to re-route the Muni M line through the complex to make transit more accessible. New retail would eliminate the need to drive somewhere for something as simple as a quart of milk.

"To me what's most exciting about this is, if they get it right, it's actually taking an area that right now generates a ton of car trips, and making it walkable," Metcalf said.

But Goodman and others have suggested that Parkmerced should be designated as a landmark, which would hamper development plans, precisely because its character is reminiscent of that postwar era. A draft report issued by Page & Turnbull, a historic-architecture firm, found that Parkmerced would be eligible for designation as a historic district on the California and national registers of historic places.

It was built in the 1940s by Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. as part of a government-supported effort to supply housing for the middle-class and families of service-members. The "courtyard vignettes" bear the mark of Thomas Dolliver Church, regarded as the founding father of the modern movement in landscape design.

"It was Church's biggest public project," notes Inge Horton, an architect and former regional planner with the San Francisco Planning Department who completed an historic assessment of Parkmerced for Docomomo, the International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighborhoods of the Modern Movement. Horton has mixed feel-



Historic preservationists say the shared courtyards at Parkmerced should be preserved because they were designed by a renowned landscape architect. | PHOTO BY REBECCA BOWE

ings about the proposed development. "It is one of these things where the developer or owner proposes to tear down all the low-rise buildings and put up a high-rise and make it a little bit green," Horton said. "Sorry to be so cynical."

Goodman wonders just what's so sustainable about demolishing buildings that the owners have just sunk millions of dollars into for fix-ups and cosmetic repairs. "When you look at the overall site, it's a functioning community — and it's essential housing," he says, wondering why it can't be reused and expanded," he says.

Hartman says he views the site "as an architect," and finds it to be incongruous with San Francisco's character. "To be frank, the architecture is unworthy of this extraordinary site," he says. Instead, he sees potential for what it could be: a pioneering example of a green neighborhood that uses urban density to meet the challenge of climate change.

MOVING OUT

At a public meeting held in June to discuss the future plans, residents shared their anxiety about being forced to move. Some tenants, particularly seniors, have lived there for decades in rent-controlled units. Parkmerced Investors has promised that those residents would be able to maintain their current rents in brand new, comparatively sized apartments. But Goodman points out that many would lose their meticulously cared-for garden plots and be forced to adapt to life in a high-rise instead.

About half the tenants are college students who attend San Francisco State, which lies adjacent to Parkmerced. District 7 Sup. Sean Elsbernd, who represents the neighborhood, told the *Guardian* that he often receives complaints from his constituents about "keggers" that go on until the wee morning hours.

"Parkmerced is such a fascinating societal study," Elsbernd noted. "You've got a lot of folks who've been there since it was built, but really the

vast majority now are students at San Francisco State who are so transient and really aren't terribly invested in the neighborhood."

Elsbernd said he also shares a different concern, which came across at the meeting loud and clear: traffic. Although development plans emphasize cycling, Muni access, and a shuttle that would carry passengers to the Daly City BART, the redesign would come with a grand total of more than 11,000 on-street and off-street parking spaces. And it's situated along the 19th Avenue corridor, which is already notorious for traffic snarls (and for pedestrian deaths). Some fear the combination of two new developments would fuel perpetual, dangerous gridlock.

"At minimum, we're talking 5,000 additional vehicular trips a day," said Calvin Welch, a longtime affordable housing activist. "You couldn't build housing further from where people work if you tried." Welch regards the smart-growth school of thought, enthusiastically endorsed by SPUR, with skepticism. The pitfall, he says, is "allowing high-density development in transit-oriented neighborhoods ... and then finding out that people drive."

On the other hand, Welch said, market-rate rental housing is much more affordable than market-rate condominiums, so Parkmerced will provide a service compared to the condos that are pricing so many middle-class families out of San Francisco. And the eastern half of the city has had its share of new residential development, so building new rental units in the western half might be an appropriate counterbalance.

Goodman said he has his own vision for Parkmerced, which would employ adaptive reuse of the existing structures and ensure truly affordable housing for people of modest means. "If I had money and tons of land and all the power in the world, I'd do it a completely different way," he says. "But I don't. I'm a tenant living on site." **SFBG**

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The harshest cut

Sierra timber practices aren't front-page news anymore — but the brutal devastation of clear-cutting continues apace

By Cécile Lepage
news@sfbg.com

GREEN CITY “I wake up at night at 3:30, hearing the logging trucks and knowing what’s happening,” Susan Robinson complains. “It makes me sick.”

Robinson lives just off State Route 4 in Arnold, a Calaveras County community perched on the western slope of the Sierra.

For the past nine years, this feisty retiree has been clamoring to get Sierra Pacific Industries, California’s leading timber company, to stop clear-cutting the forest. “I’m the daughter of a forester myself. I am not anti-logging,” she told us. “Of course, SPI should be able to log its land. But it shouldn’t have the right to obliterate everything.”

A decade ago, logging and forestry practices in the Sierra were big news. Media reports, protests, and legislative action focused on SPI’s practice of slicing through entire large tracts of land, hacking down every tree, bush, and seedling and leaving nothing but devastation behind.

But most of the news media have long since moved on to other issues — and the clear-cutting continues. If anything, the pace at which SPI is felling the forest has hastened since the intensive logging controversies grabbed headlines in the 1990s.

“When I recently read the June 2000 issue of the *Guardian* exposing SPI’s activities in the Sierra, I was pained because I thought, ‘Wow! This could have been written yesterday,’” said Marily Woodhouse, a Sierra Club organizer in Shasta County.

It’s not as if nothing has changed under the Sierra sun. Some timber companies have adopted more responsible practices. But SPI is still a major problem. And as the largest private landowner in the state, its footprint is huge. Conservation activists have been exploring new opposition tactics while maintaining their diligent efforts on the legislative, legal, and educational fronts.

Susan Robinson and the other members of the Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch often take visitors to tour the backcountry roads and see the dam-

age for themselves. On Winton Road, plots managed by SPI are adjacent to the Stanislaus National Forest, which is administered by the U.S. Forest Service — and the contrast is staggering.

Patches SPI harvested two years ago are still bare due to herbicide spraying. Between stumps, 10-inch-long replanted ponderosa pines may poke their frail limbs out of the churned soil, but there’s nothing left on a 20-acre lot for deer, bobcats, raccoons, or woodpeckers to eat, rest on, or breed in. No bees pollinating. No chickarees denning. It will take decades for the seedlings to reach maturity.

On the opposite side of the gravel road, on Forest Service land, sugar pines, ponderosa pines, lodgepole pines, incense cedars, oaks, and white firs of different ages shelter ferns, mushrooms, and berry plants. The forest has been thinned to reduce fire hazard, but it has not been converted to a monoculture tree farm.

“What grows back after you clear-cut is a plantation,” said Doug Bevington of Environment Now. “A forest is not simply a collection of trees. What makes a forest a vibrant ecosystem is its diversity, having different species and different ages. And it’s the diversity of the forest that creates the habitat to support more species of life.”

CLEAR-CUT FRENZY

You don’t need to travel to the Sierra to get the picture — connecting to Google Earth will suffice. Zoom into Arnold and levitate above Highway 4. Beyond the lush forest “beauty strips,” the landscape looks like a moth-eaten blanket of evergreens.

Over the past 10 years, SPI has clear-cut 18 square miles in Calaveras County alone. (Clear-cut also includes slightly more moderate logging techniques that leave few trees and snags remaining on an otherwise desert-like tract.)

State records show that between 1996 and 2006 SPI clear-cut 270,000 acres of forests and dumped 335,000 pounds of herbicide into the soil. That’s roughly 420 square miles of scalped woodland. SPI isn’t the only timber company clear-cutting in this state, it just happens to be the most zealous. And it owns 1.7 million



Calaveras clear-cut: Denuded forest near the town of Arnold shows the impact of rapacious industrial forestry. | PHOTO COURTESY OF EBBETTS PASS FOREST WATCH

acres.

Proponents and opponents of clear-cutting agree on one point: it’s the most productive and the cheapest way to grow timber. But environmentalists say the ecosystems pay a heavy price for the practice.

Mark Pawlicki, SPI’s director of government affairs, told us that the company meets the standards set by the state’s Forest Practice Rules, and that Californian clear-cutting regulations are the strictest in the country. California allows 20 acre cuts; in Washington, the denuded area can reach 240 acres.

Timber harvest plans are not only reviewed the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), but also by the California Department of Fish and Game, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Geological Survey. Recently, SPI has even started to replant its clear-cuts with two or three different tree species.

The scientific community recognizes that clear-cutting has greater ecological impacts than any other harvesting method. Such radical treatment may be the only way to salvage logs from woods killed by insects or fire. And the industry is forced to mitigate some of the impacts — buffer zones, for instance, are required for waterways supporting aquatic life.

But that’s not enough: the tiny tributaries feeding the waterways aren’t protected, so sediment and debris can end up in the protected streams, affecting water quality, fish species, and amphibians. The water cycle is inevitably disrupted, with snowpack melting earlier in the

season and rainfall running off the naked slopes. The fragmentation of the forest displaces animals that move around for their living, putting pressure on surrounding lands.

Environmental organizations are also concerned about exacerbation of climate change.

In national forests, clear-cutting has been phased out for more than a decade. Members of Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch wonder why the state can’t make the same rules for private loggers.

“I do reckon that private companies have to make profits,” said Forest Watch activist Addie Jacobson. “But we do see companies like Collins Pine harvest timber in a way that all of us are happy with yet make some profit.”

GREEN WOOD

Collins Pine has been managing 94,000 acres of timberland in Plumas and Tehama counties since 1941. It primarily uses selective cutting, where only certain trees are sparsely removed. Chief forester Jay Francis says that after a month, you can hardly tell a logged area from a pristine one.

“Our owners do not want us to do anything that compromises the values of our Sierra mixed-conifer forest, whether its wildlife, clean water, recreation, esthetics,” he told us. “So we do a very minor amount of clear-cutting. In fact, we just turned in a plan for a 15-acre clear-cut for health reasons. We have an infestation of root-rots in an area. That’s probably the first clear-cut we’ve done in 50 years.”

Those cuts are less than six acres wide, meeting the rules of the Forest

Stewardship Council (FSC), an international organization that certifies sustainable forest management. Since its inception in 1993, FSC has developed standards to accommodate the commercial, social, and environmental values of forestland. It has the backing of the world’s leading environmental groups, including Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund. Consumers can rely on its label to buy environmentally and socially responsible wood products.

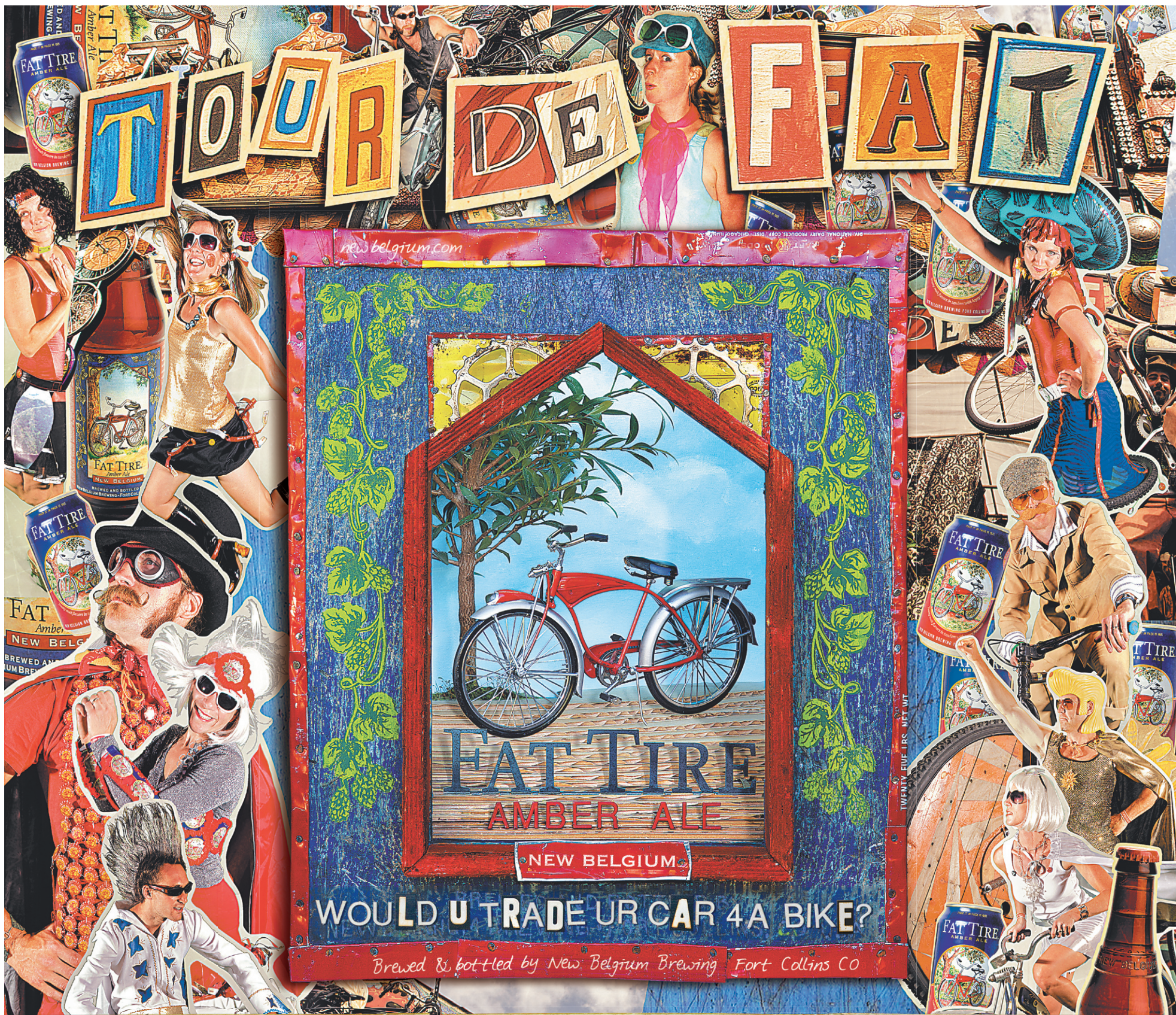
Collins Pine was the first privately held logging company in North America to receive FSC certification, in 1993. There are now 22 certified companies.

Gary Dodge, director of science at FSC U.S., contrasted FSC’s approach to wildlife with CAL FIRE’s, which only protects state-listed endangered species. “We also believe that it’s the role of the forest to prevent common species from becoming rare, or prevent rare species from becoming extinct,” he said.

In the iconic North Coast redwoods of Mendocino County, the Mendocino Redwood Company has taken its cue from Collins Pine. In 1998, MRC took over 228,800 acres from the environmental villain Louisiana Pacific. From the start, MRC managers stated that they aimed for the business to be a good steward and a successful business. The company received FSC certification in 2000.

“There are a lot of models for what it means to be a successful business, but there are fewer for what it means to be a steward of the land,”

CONTINUES ON PAGE 13 »



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Clear cut CONT.

Sandy Dean, chairman of MRC, told us. “We think quite literally that it is to leave it better than we found it. It includes a reduction in the level of harvest, the elimination of clear-cutting, and the adoption of a specific policy to protect old-growth trees.”

SPI is not impressed by this trend. “By and large, the companies that exclusively use selective logging just have a different objective than we do,” Pawlicki said. “They’re not growing as much timber as we are.”

SPI, nevertheless, is also using the buzz-word sustainability. According to Pawlicki, the state of California requires timber companies to be sustainable anyway. “You can’t cut more than you grow under California law.” Jumping on the green-building bandwagon, SPI has also sought certification — with an organization called the Sustainable Forest Initiative that is not recognized by the LEED green building rating system.

NEW BATTLEGROUND

These days, conservation activists are trying out new strategies to compel SPI to straighten up its act. ForestEthics’ Save the Sierra campaign aims at protecting forests using the market as a weapon. “The average person may not have heard of SPI,” said activist Joshua Buswell Charkow, “but they know its clients: Home Depot, Lowe’s, Kolbe & Kolbe [Millwork Company].

Some environmental groups still resort to litigation. “I’m not too optimistic to think that the industry will reform itself,” said Brendan Cummings from the Center for Biological Diversity.

The center recently filed three lawsuits against CAL FIRE for approving timber harvest plans without properly analyzing the greenhouse gas emissions from each specific project. Instead, the agency accepted SPI’s broad assertion that growing its tree plantation over the next 100 years would offset the immediate carbon release caused by plowing the soil and burning the slash. But even if that’s true, the nature of the climate crisis is such that we need to curb emissions right now, said Cummings. In response, SPI withdrew its plans.

Concerned Sierra citizens are also challenging logging plans in the courts. In Shasta County, Marily Woodhouse has been opposing a plan to clear-cut 809 acres in the vicinity of the Digger Creek that flows through her town of Manton for fear it will disrupt an already heavily logged watershed. The Battle Creek Alliance, the coalition she helped form, filed

suit in January 2008. “What happens if they drop a plan? Eventually they come back again,” she said.

“The lawsuits do slow things down. But the fact is, [the loggers are] never going away.”

Past experience has taught activists to be wary. Ten years ago, when SPI’s frenetic activity first came under public scrutiny, rallies and media coverage curtailed the timber giants’ greed. Yuba Valley residents led a protest against a plan to scrape 171 acres along the banks of the South

Yuba River. And farther South, locals from Arnold faced with an 884-acre clear-cut launched Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch. SPI kept a low profile for a while, even declaring to the press it would scale back clear-cutting in Calaveras County — only to redouble its practices a few months down the road.

The Yuba River site has been spared, thanks to the intervention of the Trust for Public Land, which has been able to purchase 110,000 acres from SPI. Those parcels, also located

in the Tahoe region and Humboldt County, were transferred to public ownership for conservation.

On the policy front, Forests Forever has been leading the charge for 20 years. The lobbying group has sponsored three initiatives in Sacramento to ban or further restrict clear-cutting. The last bill was killed by the Assembly Natural Resources Committee in April 2008.

“There’s a lingering sense that logging is still an economic driver in the state,” said Forests Forever

executive director Paul Hughes. “But tourism and retirement, which depend on healthy forests, actually contribute more to the economy.”

Skeptics say that 80 percent of the wood used in California comes from Washington and Oregon or from the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta, where clear-cutting is the norm anyway. But as Hughes put it, “You’ve got to start somewhere to fight this abomination.” **SFBG**



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Similarly, through Beyt Tikkun and through our publication Tikkun Magazine (www.Tikkun.org) many Jews are coming to understand that they need not express blind loyalty to the current policies of the State of Israel to be a self-affirming Jew. We support the Israeli peace movement, and we support the movements for ecological sanity, peace, social justice and human rights—here and around the world. And we oppose the cynical realists—because believing in God as we understand God is believing in the possibility of healing and transformation (which is what the word “tikkun” means in Hebrew). We start with inner work on High Holidays to actualize that possibility, but we don’t end there—we move to challenge the materialism and selfishness of our society as well, and the power of Wall Street, the media, and the insurance companies currently trying to sink meaningful health care reform.

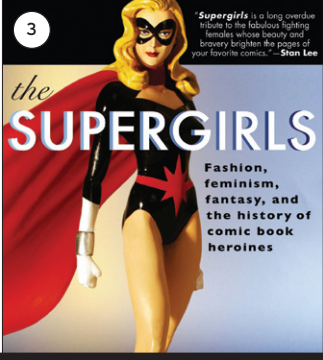
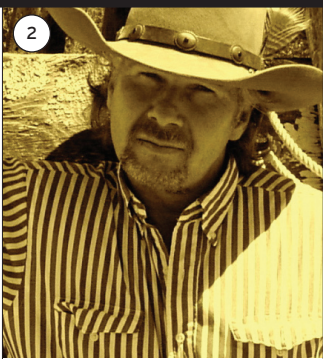
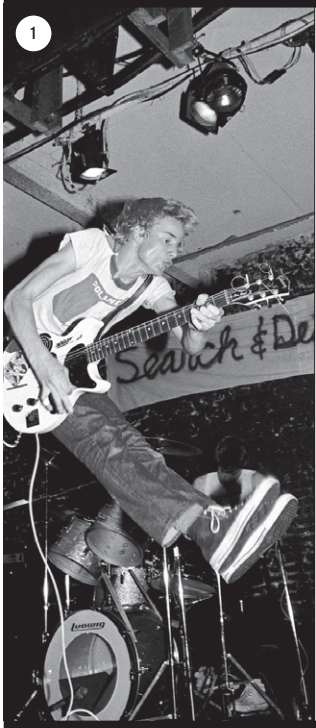
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GUARDIAN

THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN PICKS



WEDNESDAY SEPT. 9

VISUAL ART

“GGG???: Girls, Gays, Groceries”

999 is the upside-down 666 which is also GGG. Say ??? Screw the diabolical typographical hijinks, the only satanic barcodes you need to scan are firmly pasted onto “genius, Messiah, douche” photographer Merkley???’s inner forehead, as he presents his latest hyperreal concoctions — mainly featuring absurdly erotic semi-nude portraits of SF nightlife’s better-known female figures — at Project One Gallery on, yes, 9/9/09. As always with the man trailing triple question marks, this is club-influenced photography taken to whole other level, into a sickly-sweet, prickly-perverse universe where sugar-shock meets sugar walls, and toothaches are the new heartbreaks. Everyone looks so *now* under the Safeway’s fluorescent tubes, but only Merkley???’ can make your strawberry Smucker’s squirt from a few feet away. Expect some waxed fruits in the cart, too. **(Marke B.)**

6:66 p.m., free.
Project One Gallery
251 Rhode Island, SF
(415) 465-2129
www.p1sf.com

THURSDAY SEPT. 10

THEATER

“Second Attack of the Killer B-Movies”

Will San Francisco’s love affair with plays adapted from films (preferably of the cheesy or scary variety) ever die? Not if the genre’s many fans have anything to say about it! Foul Play Productions has got their number, to be sure: last year, Sean Owens and Cameron Eng unleashed staged versions of *The Birds*, *The Bad Seed*, and *The Blob*. They’re also gleefully responsible for *The Wicker Man: A Rock Opera About the Ultimate Sacrifice*, and *Stale Magnolias*, an über-campy take on a certain play-turned-movie-turned-play-again which was performed in an actual hair salon. For a series dubbed “The Second Attack of the Killer B-Movies,” Foul Play thunders forward with *Blue Velvet* (Sept. 10-22), *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Oct. 2–17), and *Barbarella* (Oct. 22–Nov. 7). On the menu are puppets, dance, animation, and one entry — hint: monsters are involved — performed “entirely in black and white.” **(Cheryl Eddy)**

8 p.m. (Thurs.–Sat., through Nov. 7), \$25
Stage Werx
533 Sutter, SF

(415) 730-3433
www.foulplaysf.com

MUSIC

Pictureplane

Pictureplane’s My Space pics are a real picture plane gas — you get the feeling he’ll try on just about eanything, and also take it off. Sonically, this Denver, Colo., electronic dreamer and schemer has a knack for polishing the sheen of synth pop until it’s sharp as a Ginsu wielded by a tweaked-out killer in goth garb. The spirits of Kylie Minogue, Stevie Nicks, and ABBA crash through a tri-angle-wipe video effects in “Goth Star,” one shimmering castle on *Dark Rift* (Lovepump United). If Matt Furie’s art turned into girly sounds it might be like this.

(Johnny Ray Huston)

With Health, Mi Ami
9 p.m., \$10
Bottom of the Hill
1233 17th St., SF
(415) 621-4455
www.bottomofthehill.com

LIT/VISUAL ART

Mike Madrid: *The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy and the History of Comic Book Heroines*

In the wake of recent news about Disney buying out long-time comic book behemoth Marvel, indie-minded fans can head over to the Cartoon

Art Museum to celebrate the world of independent publishing. Local author Mike Madrid’s *The Supergirls: Fashion, Feminism, Fantasy and the History of Comic Book Heroines* (Exterminating Angel Press, 2009) looks at the history of female super heroes ranging from Wonder Woman to She-Hulk, exploring their place in popular culture. **(Sean McCourt)**

7 p.m., free
Cartoon Art Museum
655 Mission, SF
(415) 227-8666
www.cartoonart.org

FRIDAY SEPT. 11

THEATER

Bohemian Cowboy

It’s a story straight from *Unsolved Mysteries*: in November 2005, Raymond Dean Shurtz, a singer, cowboy, and traveler, drove his pickup into the desert of Clark County, Nev. and wandered off into the Valley of Fire. For almost a year, the search and rescue team scoured the area for Shurtz’ remains, but none were ever found. Haunted by his father’s disappearance, Raymond King Shurtz has written a one-man play that tries to make sense of the event. Shurtz weaves impor-

tant elements and characters in their father/son relationship, such as music, Jesus, and Hank Williams, to tell a story that examines loss and the seeming absence of God in a tragedy. **(Victoria Nguyen)**

8 p.m. (continues through Sat/19), \$15
Off-Market Theater
965 Mission, SF
(800) 838-3006
www.cafearts.com

FILM

“Top Bill: The Films of William Klein”

Who are you, William Klein? America, or you an American in Paris in the 1960s, casting an amused pleasure-seeking eye at the follies of haute couture? Or are you a filmmaker with a radical dedication upending America’s race politics whose movie about Cassius Clay/Muhammad Ali captured his societal force — to quote one film-loving friend — as much as his power in the ring. Photographer, filmmaker, and more, William Klein knows how to make the past in black and white sharper than the reality you before right now, and the reds and blues as vivid as a future that has yet to arrive. Complete with a look at tennis (1980’s *The French*, which true to form, is drawn to the charisma of

Yannick Noah), this series is a must-see. **(Huston)**

6:30 p.m. (series continues through Oct. 11), \$5.50–\$9.50
Pacific Film Archive Theater
2575 Bancroft, Berk.
(510) 643-2197
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

PERFORMANCE

“SINSation”

Where do butterflies go when it rains? Also, where do drag queens go when they outgrow hosting basket contests and lipsynching Grace Jones? Lately, the underside of the leaf that many larger-than-nightlife gender clowns cling to is reality television or bit parts in NBC’s *Trauma*. But a lucky few have hitched their glittery star to more challenging platforms, like Cirque du Soleil’s *Zumanity* or the stage at Carnegie Hall. Twisted Manhattan cabaret stalwart Joey Arias has done both, carving out a wily brunette legend since his downtown clubkid days. Diva Sherry Vine, while not above the odd basket contest, has also made a theatrical name for herself as an off-Broadway sensation and incredibly leggy chanteuse. They’ll be bringing their world-traveling bonanza of bawdy jazz and wicked humor, “SINSation,” to the Razzz Room for two nights. The show’s “pitched for mature audiences,” but

MUSIC 20	EVENTS 40	ART 41	STAGE 42	FOOD + DRINK 44	FILM 47
<div>6</div> 	<div>7</div> 	<div>8</div> 	<div>9</div> 		<p>(1) Chip Dil Goes Jackknife, by Ruby Ray (see Tues/15); (2) Raymond King Shurtz in Bohemian Cowboy (see Fri/11); (3) cover of Mike Madrid’s The Supergirls (see Thurs/10); (4) Ghirardelli Square Chocolate Festival fun (see Sat/12); (5) photo of Chelsea Starr by Merkley??? (see Wed/9); (6) still from William Klein’s <i>Mr. Freedom</i> (see Fri/11); (7) Kush Arora (see Sat/12); (8) Pictureplane (see Thurs/10); (9) Foul Play’s Bride of Frankenstein (see Thurs/10)</p> <p>KUSH ARORA PHOTO BY KELLY KOEHLER; PICTUREPLANE PHOTO BY ELIZABETH ECKLAND; BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN PHOTO BY GEOFF TEAGUE</p>

I say bring the children, so they can aim a little higher. **(Marke B.)**

10:30 p.m. (also Sat/12), \$25–\$30
Rrazz Room
220 Mason, SF
(415) 394-1189 www.therrazzroom.com

SATURDAY
SEPT. 12

EVENT
14th Annual Ghirardelli Square Chocolate Festival
If you have a sweet tooth, make sure you’re one of the estimated 40,000 chocolate lovers who will come through to this weekend’s Ghirardelli Chocolate Festival. It’s a celebration of decadence as 40 local and national vendors come together to offer their favorite samplings, from chocolate stuffed marshmallows to chocolate martinis and Ghirardelli’s famous hot fudge sundaes. Visitors at the family-friendly event can also sit down at a chocolate tea party, attend wine and chocolate pairing seminars, or watch chef demonstrations from the likes of *Top Chef* finalist Casey Thompson and Kara Lind of Kara’s Cupcakes. **(Nguyen)**

Noon–5 p.m. (continues through Sun/13)
free admission; \$20 for 15

tastings
Ghirardelli Square
900 North Point, SF
(415) 775-5500
www.ghirardellisq.com

MUSIC
Kush Arora: Record Release Party for *Boiling Over*
Global dub is peaking a creative apex right now. And pushing the phenomenon further into the swarming oblivion is none other than local filthy rhythm scientist, Kush Arora. If this year’s earlier effort *Dread Bass Chronicle* (Record Label) didn’t hook your terrestrial membrane to his gutter patterns weaving sewer systems on a neutron star, then perhaps this week’s follow-up *Boiling Over* (Record Label) will set you in motion. Yes, two ridiculously heavy and impressively versatile efforts to set a soundtrack for your grind — that is, if you get down like a 21st century Superfly. **(Michael Krimper)**

With Maneesh The Twister, Fluorescent Grey, V:Shal Kanwar, J Rrogers, & Amar
9 p.m., \$10
Club Six
60 Sixth St., SF
(415) 863-1221
www.clubsix1.com

LIT
Poets Write Crime: Summer Brenner and Owen Hill
Like crime? Me too. After

an appearance at the San Francisco Poetry Center, the Poets Write Crime duo of Summer Brenner and Owen Hill are hot-footing it directly to Market Street. Hill, known for his Clay Blackburn mystery series, will be reading from his new book, *The Incredible Double*, where the bisexual bibliophile finds more trouble and temptation in Berkeley and beyond. Brenner’s *I-5: A Novel of Crime, Transport and Sex* is a cult favorite. The book is a rollicking gangsters-on-the-lam tale, in turn blackly humorous, suspenseful, and heartbreaking. Plus the Green Arcade is the best new bookstore in San Francisco — seems like a good time to support it. **(D. Scot Miller)**

7:30 p.m., free
The Green Arcade
1680 Market, SF
(415) 431-6800
www.thegreenarcade.com

SUNDAY
SEPT. 13

EVENT/THEATER
Shakespeare in the Park Family Day
An old *Onion* editorial entitled “Shakespeare Was, Like, The Ultimate Rapper” (Issue 41.34, 8/24/2005) lampoons the well-meaning educators who try to make the Bard’s

work seem more immediate through inane cultural comparisons. That being said, you could argue that Shakespeare was, in fact, the ultimate mercenary screenplay writer, whose formulaic crowd-pleasers just happened to be some of the English language’s most transcendent works of art. The SF Shakespeare Festival’s Shakespeare in the Park Family Day pre-show includes various children’s activities, a performance by teen actors, and costume merchants, before a 2:30 production of the zany mistaken identity caper *The Comedy of Errors*, a born Mike Meyers vehicle if ever I’ve seen one. **(Tony Papanikolas)**

Pre-show 1 p.m., show 2:30 p.m.; free
Main Post Parade Ground Lawn (between Graham and Keyes)
The Presidio, SF
(415) 558-0888
www.sfshakes.org

TUESDAY
SEPT. 15

VISUAL ART
“Punk Passage: San Francisco First Wave Punk 1977-1981”
San Francisco’s punk rock scene of the late 1970s produced some of the best bands to come out of the genre, include the Avengers,

Dead Kennedys, Negative Trend, and Crime. Bay Area photographer Ruby Ray was there to document it all, covering the movement for the influential punk zine *Search and Destroy*. In celebration of Ray’s forthcoming book, the San Francisco Public Library is hosting “Punk Passage: San Francisco First Wave Punk 1977-1981,” an exhibit featuring some 45 of her photographs, along with original zines, concert flyers and posters, articles and other ephemera from the library’s collection. There will also be a spotlight on Avengers signer Penelope Houston, showcasing original artwork, albums, and memorabilia from her personal collection. **(McCourt)**

5–7 p.m. reception (show continues through Dec. 6)
Jewett Gallery
San Francisco Public Library, Main Branch
100 Larkin, SF
(415) 557-4400
www.sfpl.org

EVENT/FILM
BDSM: It’s Not What You Think! DVD Release Party
Kink, corsets, and cocktails come together for an explosive party to celebrate the DVD release of *BDSM: It’s Not What You Think!* The documentary, which began as a student film project, unravels

the media-driven stigma and stereotypes that regularly confront those in the BDSM community. For the release party, a Q&A panel with the half-hour film’s participants and director will follow a screening. The evening is hosted by writer/sex educator, Dr. Carol Queen, PhD, and it showcases corsetry fashions from Dark Garden, with a raffle drawing featuring exotic prizes that value up to \$400. **(Nguyen)**

7:30 p.m., \$10
Center for Sex and Culture
1519 Mission, SF
(415) 255-1155
www.centerforsexandculture.com **SFBG**

The *Guardian* listings deadline is two weeks prior to our Wednesday publication date. To submit an item for consideration, please include the title of the event, a brief description of the event, date and time, venue name, street address (listing cross streets only isn’t sufficient), city, telephone number readers can call for more information, telephone number for media, and admission costs. Send information to Listings, the Guardian Building, 135 Mississippi St., SF, CA 94107; fax to (415) 487-2506; or e-mail (paste press release into e-mail body — no text attachments, please) to listings@sfbg.com. We cannot guarantee the return of photos, but enclosing an SASE helps. Digital photos may be submitted in jpeg format; the image must be at least 240 dpi and four inches by six inches in size. We regret we cannot accept listings over the phone.

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DANCE COMPANY

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PHOTO: Ian Xiaoyi

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PHOTO: Twentieth-Century Fox

FILM/VIDEO

BIGGER THAN LIFE
by Nicholas Ray

Thu, Sep 10 & Sat, Sep 12, 7:30 pm
Sun, Sep 13, 2 pm

A domestic melodrama that lays bare the myths of postwar American life and critiques alpha masculinity and the 50s nuclear family. (1956, 95 min, new 35mm print)

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behaviors.

Sep 22 Audience Exchanges
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Sep 27
After the 2 p.m. show

Sep 23 OUT with A.C.T.
After the 8 p.m. show Mingle with the cast
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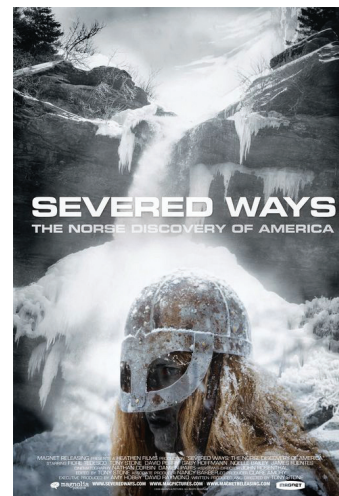
A blip in the Northern sky

DVD REVIEW If a Viking takes a shit in the woods, will anyone care? I asked myself this after watching *Severed Ways: The Norse Discovery of America*, an admirable if somewhat aimless and altogether odd duck of an independent film. Believe me, I wanted to love this movie more. The press release couldn't have made it sound any cooler: Vikings lost in the New World in 1007! A black metal soundtrack! They terrorize Irish monks! It's in Old Norse! Duuuuude!

All those elements do come into play in this shoestring historic epic, but *Severed Ways* ultimately becomes as directionless as its stranded protagonists. At the very least, director Tony Stone, who also wrote, edited, and stars in the production, deserves credit for his dogged persistence of vision, even if the final product feels like sitting through the collected outtakes of reenactments from a History Channel documentary.

Based on the real expedition by Thorfinn Karlsefni, an Icelander who planned to settle in the New World, *Severed Ways* follows errant warriors Orn (Stone) and Volnard (Fiore Tedesco) as they set out into the wilds of North America in hopes of finding others of their kind, having narrowly survived a raid by indigenous peoples (whom they call "skraelings"). Most of the film consists of Orn and Volnard wandering, and then wandering some more. In lieu of a narrative, Stone instead focuses — almost obsessively — on the crude, dull, details of day-to-day survival: we see the Vikings fell trees and build lean-tos; Orn sloppily beheads and butchers an actual chicken; and, in what has to be the film's biggest WTF moment, we also see him take a gargantuan dump, using nearby foliage as TP.

In its strongest moments, Stone's warts-and-all aesthetic



and borderline-vérité commitment to realism evokes Herzog circa *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) or *Aguirre: The Wrath of God* (1972). Stone's two cinematographers — shooting in digital — capture some lovely shots of the wild beauty of the Viking's alien surroundings. And the film's unhurried editing and tableau-like shots convey both the uncertainty and monotony of the Vikings' experience as lone strangers in a strange land.

However, these moments are few and far between. And if Stone harbored any loftier intentions of conveying the emotional and spiritual depths of roughing it, they are hamstrung by the film's heavy metal frippery, most notably a hilarious but totally random shot of Orn headbanging and some awkward translations of the Old Norse dialogue ("We're toast if we stay here"). And it is here that Stone's taste in black metal should be questioned. The much-hyped soundtrack is a disappointment, with the majority of the synth-strings heavy ambient metal tracks simply not suiting the film's po-faced tone. Some harder, more buzz-filled and, well, genuinely darker, selections would've been appreciated. A map wouldn't have hurt either. **(Matt Sussman)**

THE MIX

- (1) Retro hair-metal vocals at their finest: Holy Grail, Annie's Social Club
- (2) Post-kickball flipcup, Ireland's 32
- (3) Kayaking Elkhorn Slough
- (4) Re-evaluating Echo and the Bunnymen
- (5) Enjoying Burning Man's ghost town effect

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music

"I wanted to make something really classic that everyone could say they liked," says Christopher Owens (bottom right) of Girls. Haters beware or prepare: with *Album*, he and longtime bandmate Chet "JR" White (bottom left) may have done just that.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY SPENCER HANSEN

GIRLS
ALBUM

The searchers

From Slovenian cults to S.F.: classic California rock goes pop — and reaches timelessness — on Girls' debut, *Album*

By L.C. Mason
a&cletters@sfbg.com

COVER STORY When there is no firm ground, the only sensible thing to do is to keep moving. Lester Bangs wrote that, but countless wandering souls have lived it since the first humans stumbled across the continents. Long after land bridges dissolved and the great cities of the world were mapped, San Francisco — the legendary land's-end haven for dreamers, kooks, and hedonists — became a butterfly net for the world's drifters. Prismatic crowds have come and gone through the decades, helping to grow one of the world's great music scenes.

"There's just a certain point where you realize that nothing is going to satisfy you all the time," muses Christopher Owens, one of two masterminds behind the SF band Girls. "The solution is to be a person who's always looking for the next thing. Oscar Wilde said that the meaning of life is the search for meaning of life. But there

is no meaning to life — it's just never laying down and accepting your surroundings, even if they're comfortable. It's like the Rolling Stones song, "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction." I think I've always felt like that, and always will be like that."

Looking up from peeling the label off a kombucha bottle and blinking his big eyes, Chet "JR" White nonchalantly nods: "I'm really never content, hardly ever happy, but every once in a while I'm both. Everything's about getting somewhere else, I think."

While most bands fade slowly or implode, ever so rarely one explodes into something transcendent because it's hit a nerve or two and tapped into the human experience in a profound way. Girls is that kind of band. Owens and White have been around for years, playing raucous live shows while quietly perfecting their imminent debut LP, *Album* (Fantasy Trashcan/Matador). A collection of glam-pop with that genre's flair for artifice, it also — unlike traditional glam pop

— possesses an emotional authenticity absent from so much music being churned out today.

Owens and White first united as roommates in San Francisco, but their lives couldn't have started out more differently. While White was playing in punk bands in his parents' Santa Cruz garage and going to recording school, Owens was growing up as part of the Slovenian sect of the Children of God cult, where secular music was forbidden unless one of the cult's adults decided to indulge the younger members' desire to learn the occasional Beatles or 1960s folk tune.

Owens broke away from the Children of God at 16 to live with his sister in Amarillo, Texas. Everything the rest of us had heard a thousand times before we were teenagers was a revelation to him. "When I learned to play the guitar, I was still in the cult and I didn't really know anything but their music," he says. "When I turned 16 and left the group, it was like the whole world was in front of me. I got the Cranberries, the Cure,

Black Sabbath, Sinead O'Connor, Michael Jackson, and the *Romeo + Juliet* movie soundtrack, and I'd play them on my stereo in my room and learn them and play guitar. The next wave was pop music. When I turned 18, I had become an American teen."

Owens was quickly engulfed by the small town's punk scene: "I threw away seven years of my life there. All I have is tattoos from Amarillo." He played in a few punk bands, the music drawing him in because it was "really angsty." But after a few years, he felt the itch to do something new. "There wasn't really anything in particular that drew me to San Francisco," he says. "I made a commitment that I was gonna leave Amarillo on New Year's Day in 2005. All my friends moved to Austin, which I thought was the lamest thing in the world. I wanted absolute change. I wanted to totally reinvent myself and leave all those people behind."

Shortly after he landed in the Bay Area, Owens was asked to join the L.A. band Holy Shit. "I only played in the band because I was totally obsessed with Ariel Pink and Matt Fishbeck," he says, referring to the band's underground-hero founders. "I started to write these songs to impress them and to vent my feelings, but the main

driving force was that I wanted to be like them so much. I kept thinking *I'm gonna make something that's gonna blow their minds*. I wanted to make something really classic that everyone could say they liked."

And that's what he did. Owens wrote dozens of songs inspired by his friends, ex-lovers, and San Francisco itself, and recorded them, guided by White's keen ear for grandeur. After scrapping song takes recorded on a four-track, the pair spent money on a proper tape machine and used only a few microphones to keep *Album* crisp and clear.

"I like big, amazing sounding records," says engineering wizard and bassist White, who counts Wrecking Crew bassist Carol Kaye as an influence. "I hate lo-fi music. Early on, people would call us lo-fi and I would take it kind of hard. We were just attempting to make the best-sounding thing we could with what we had — as good as any big record that had a lot of money put into it. I always like records that are made under some sort of duress. I think those records are great, if you can hear it. When I hear ours, I can hear the moments that go along with the music."

With *Album*, Owens and White edge closer to timelessness than
CONTINUES ON PAGE 22 »

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"I always like records that are made under some sort of duress," says Chet "JR" White of Girls. "When I hear ours, I can hear the moments that go along with the music." | GUARDIAN PHOTO BY SPENCER HANSEN

Girls CONT>>

any of their San Francisco contemporaries. While much of the city's rock scene is embroiled in a hot and noisy love affair with psychedelic garage music, the boys of Girls have come up with something different: classic melodic songs for a restless soul in search of freedom and purpose in this whirlwind world. It doesn't hurt that behind Owens' lyrical pearls one discovers lush and unadulterated arrangements and majestic Wall of Sound-esque moments.

Album's magnum opus, "Hellhole Ratrace," is a plaintive hymn about the urge to cut loose and live. It starts off with simple guitar strumming, which in turn is soon immersed in a mesmerizing swell of buried organ work, slow hand claps, and trilling guitars that elevates it into an anthem. Owens sings, *"I don't wanna die without shaking up a leg or two / I wanna do some dancin' too,"* sings Owens. *"I don't wanna cry / my whole life through / Yeah I wanna do some laughin' too / So come on, come on, come on, come on and dance with me."*

This year has already been one hell of a ride for Girls, which now includes guitarist John Anderson ("He's the best guitar player I've ever played with in my life," says Owens) and drummer Garrett Godard. The group has been on tour nearly constantly for several months across America and Europe. For a pair of nomads like Owens and White, it seems like

the perfect gig, at least for now. Both harbor dreams of being thrust into the canon with the rest of the greats, and that reality may not be so far off.

"I want to write a song that's as good as 'Let It Be' or 'I Will Always Love You.' I want to write a song that everybody in the world knows," says Owens, glancing at his bandmate.

"I just want to be one of those bands that becomes culturally ingrained, one of those bands that's unavoidable," echoes White. "One of those bands that is larger than music itself."

Impassioned youth, existential wisdom, and stories of aching romance weave together to make *Album* a slice of true Californian pop that never stops hitting home. When you hear Owens' voice, unshackled by fuzz or distortion, crooning about the fear of dying before ever accomplishing anything, you remember that you've felt the same way dozens of times too. And when he starts chirping, "I wish I had a suntan / I wish I had a pizza and a bottle of wine," on the sarcastic, ecstatic opener "Lust for Life," you want to drop everything and run through the streets to join him. **SFBG**

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PLAYLIST

BIBIO

Ambivalence Avenue
(Warp)

Some albums escape criticism...they just sound good. And as much as I try to pick apart Bibio's surprising breakthrough — from its heavy allegiance to Boards of Canada, J Dilla and other beat icons to its catalog of hip indie styles — I can't stop listening to it. I've played it on long drives to L.A., and I've fast-forwarded through it on quick trips to the supermarket. Perhaps what moves me about it is its humanness. When he begins to croon as "Lovers' Carvings" builds into a bright, sprightly square dance, it usually leaves a smile on my face. I'm a sucker for melody. **(Mosi Reeves)**

DAM FUNK

Toeachizown
(Stones Throw)

Los Angeles ambassador of boogie grooves Dam Funk taps into the warmth of the sun with this five-volume effort. **(Michael Krimper)**

DATA

“Skywriter”

(Ekleroshock/Naive)

While much has been made of the Sebastien Grainger-sung, electro-disco tracks “One In A Million” and “Rapture,” Skywriter is full of that classic, synth-slayered French house sound that so many fell in love with when they first heard Daft Punk. Some hooks here will stay lodged in your head for weeks.

(Daniel N. Alvarez)

DUKE ELLINGTON

“Blue Pepper” (from Far East Blues)
(RCA, 1966)

This song is a switchblade. Well after the bop and hot jazz periods, Ellington might be reflecting on the wild times of those eras, creating a wildness that seems eternal. The throbbing bass and the wailing trumpet feel like the call of the night. It's what every rock and hip-hop song aspires to be. When I listen to this track, I get HOT, man! Crazy-hot! **(D. Scot Miller)**

EARL GREYHOUND

“Ghost & The Witness”
(www.earlgreyhound.com)

Blame it on the boogie: "Ghost & the Witness" is a masterwork on the Brooklyn trio's forthcoming second album, including songs most suited to rock & roll wanderlust and Atlantean meditations. MJ's martyrdom capped the summer that "black

CONTINUES ON PAGE 24 >>



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John Baldessari: A Print Retrospective from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation has been organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation.

Image: John Baldessari, *Person with Guitar (Red)*, 2005. Five-color screenprint on Sintra board with hand painting. Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer

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MUSIC

PLAYLIST

CONT>>

rock” finally crossed over, but there’s little justice, since this song’s perfect blend of funk and metal can only be captured live, rather than shuddering through inner-city blocks and highways. **(Kandia Crazy Horse)**

LUCKY DRAGONS

Open Power EP
(Teenage Teardrops)

Lucky Dragons’ elements of style are those of many California visual artists: sample nature, cultivate collage and ritualized repetition, encourage participation. The yogic patterns encircling the five wordless tracks on this expansive new EP are dazzling mind-body workouts: everything is percussion, the perfect prayer of rhythm. **(Max Goldberg)**

MF DOOM FEATURING EMPRESS STAHHR

“Still Dope” (from Born Like This)
(Lex)

Sista spits some of the tightest shit over jagged hard beats with clarity, wit and grace for two minutes and forty seconds with no punches — or punches pulled. I wake up in the morning sometimes with her voice in my head and it feels good! Still dope? Yeah. **(Miller)**



MOS DEF

The Ecstatic
(Downtown)

After 2006’s somewhat tepid though promising True Magic (Geffen), Mos drops the best hip-hop album of 2009 thus far. Named after Victor LaValle’s novel, with cover art from Charles Burnett’s Killer Of Sheep, this is a gem that I just can’t stop playing — especially “Priority” and “No Hay Nada Mas” **(Miller)**

RADIO BIRDMAN

“New Race” (from Radios Appear)
(Trafalgar, 1977)

There’s gonna’ be a new race! The kids are gonna’ start it up! We’re all gonna’ mutate! The kids are sayin’ “Yeah, hup!” The perfect three chord rock n’ roll tune, with some of the best abstract “kids-are united” lyrics ever belted. **(Tony Papanikolas)**

DEWEY REDMAN

“Lop-O-Lop” (from Tarik)
(Varese Sarabande 1969)

This is what’s happening behind the veil. Redman, Malachi Favors, and Ed Blackwell sound like a full ensemble channeling the primal forces into a shout of joy and liberation. Boundaries seem to melt away as I listen to this track and it just feels good to be connected to the organic truth through sound. **(Miller)**

SIMIAN MOBILE DISCO

“Audacity of Huge” (from Temporary Pleasure)
(Wichita Recordings)

Following in the footsteps of another certain block rockin’ ex-Manchester University duo, Simian Mobile Disco’s might finally break through stateside. The disco-leaning track features Chris Keating — vocalist of Brooklyn-weirdos Yeasayer — waxing lyrical about James Joyce, Tammy Faye Bakker, PM Dawn, Joey Ramone, honey-dipped tennis wear, among many others. My favorite dance track of the summer. **(Alvarez)**

GABOR SZABO AND THE CALIFORNIA DREAMERS

“San Franciscan Nights” (from Wind, Sky, and Diamonds)
(Impulse, 1967)

It’s funny that the most inspiring and graceful ode to the rare occasion of San Francisco heat was written and composed by a Hungarian. **(Krimper)**

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Horse Meat Disco
(Strut)

With everyone taking from the more cosmic and detached side of disco as of late, it’s nice to remember that the whole thing started with tons of true soul — super gay soul at that! Horse Meat Disco gets it all right with an amazing mix highlighted by a Karen Young song that even outshines “Hot Shot.” Never stop dancing. **(Irwin Swirloff)**

JONATHAN WILSON

Gentle Spirit
(www.songsforjonathanwilson.com)

This is not a great year for summer jams, but it has yielded some fine, coherent albums — the best and most beautiful being Gentle Spirit. Despite being anointed as a new Lord of the Canyon, JW is unsigned and has several recordings in the vault — each more epic and stunning than the last. Los Angeles is on fire now, yet the source of its renewal should be located in this, a political record for our times that’s unafraid of heart and soul. **(Crazy Horse) SFBG**

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OMAR SOSA QUARTET JOHN SANTOS SEXTET Thursday, October 22, 7:30PM	ALFREDO RODRÍGUEZ Sunday, October 25, 7PM	GIOVANNI ALLEVI PATRIZIA SCASCITELLI Sunday, November 1, 7PM
GONZALO RUBALCABA QUARTET Friday, October 23, 8PM	BÉLA FLECK, ZAKIR HUSSAIN & EDGAR MEYER Wednesday, October 28, 7:30PM	TRIO 3: LAKE, WORKMAN, CYRILLE Wednesday, November 4, 7:30PM
MELODY GARDOT Friday, October 23, 8PM	CINDY BLACKMAN'S ANOTHER LIFETIME Wednesday, October 28, 8PM	BACKYARD ALCHEMY Wednesday, November 4, 8PM
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	DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER Friday, October 30, 8PM	PAT MARTINO QUARTET LARRY GOLDINGS TRIO Friday, November 6, 8PM
	JAMES COTTON SUPERHARP BAND WITH HUBERT SUMLIN Saturday, October 31, 8PM	CAROLINA CHOCOLATE DROPS Sunday, November 8, 3PM & 7PM
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Sweeter than

Phonte and Nicolay of Foreign Exchange are smooth and soulful — but that doesn't mean soft

By Mosi Reeves
a&eletters@sfbg.com

PROFILE "I love singin', but I think I'mma call my solo album, 'Fuck That, Coretta ... These Niggas Thaink I'm Soft,'" tweeted Phonte Coleman. "Thoughts?"

The message appeared on the Southern rapper's Twitter page a day after our interview, when I asked him, "All your projects seem to have a smooth, soulful, almost smooth jazz kind of sound. What is it about that sound that appeals to you?"

While I don't know if my question prompted Phonte's subsequent post, it's clear that *Leave It All Behind* (Foreign Exchange Music), his 2008 album with Nicolay as the Foreign Exchange, charts new depths of mellowness. In person, Phonte is a hilarious, extremely un-PC wise-cracker, as subscribers to his Twitter account (and, back in the Stone Age, his MySpace page) will confirm. However, Phonte's turn as sincere loverman simply explores a side of his personality already revealed in his work as one-third of Little Brother, the hip-hop group for which he remains best known.

For the moment, let's dispense with the clichés about smooth jazz and neo-soul, because that would distract from *Leave It All Behind*'s lushly romantic longings. As one of the better hip-hop producers of the moment, Nicolay knows how to mix dynamic drum tracks — check the hard-stepping rhythm on "All or Nothing" — with sweet yet funky keyboard melodies. At his best, he makes beats filled with uncompromised beauty, from the airy blasts of "Daykeeper" to the clipped, jazz-fusion workout, "House of Cards." "I've always had a deep affinity with hip hop and R&B," says Nicolay, who has a formal music education and plays multiple instruments.

Meanwhile, Phonte has an unmistakably memorable tone, one well suited to the album's suite of tumultuous, make-up-to-break-up songs. Sometimes he flattens his voice too much, thinning it out. But he can carry a tune, and his harmonic style fits Nicolay's melody-rich sounds.

Phonte says, "I did grow up singing in church, as did most black

kids in the South. With a Christian grandma, you really didn't have no muthafuckin' choice. [But] I didn't really start taking it seriously until 2005." Once he did, he adds, "I started developing my voice, doing vocal exercises, taking piano lessons and doing voice lessons, little stuff like that." With Little Brother, he mostly stuck to hooks and elaborate chitlin' circuit in-jokes like Percy Miracles. *Leave It All Behind* marks Phonte's formal singing debut.



Phonte (left) of Foreign Exchange: "I did grow up singing in church, as did most black kids in the South. With a Christian grandma, you really didn't have no muthafuckin' choice."

PHOTO BY JATI LINDSAY

Nicolay and Phonte met in 2002 on Okayplayer.com's message board. Since Nicolay lived in the Netherlands and Phonte lived in Durham, N.C., the two collaborated virtually, sending tracks back and forth via the Internet. Released on U.K. major-indie BBE Music — and costarring Phonte's rap friends Tanya Morgan, the Justus League and Darien Brockington — the Foreign Exchange's 2004 debut *Connected* drew comparisons to *The Listening*, the 2003 debut by Phonte's other group Little Brother. Both albums sounded like down-home jam sessions, with backpack MCs blacking out in freestyle ciphers and sticking to a true-school aesthetic.

"We were trying to give the Foreign Exchange its own sound, rather than it being another Little Brother record," Nicolay says. "I've been more on the R&B side of things. That was only part of the equation

with *Connected*, and it was much a bigger part of *Leave It All Behind*." It also helped that, with Little Brother disbanded; *Leave It All Behind* focuses primarily on Nicolay and Phonte.

Nicolay, who recently moved to North Carolina with his wife and business partner, Aimee Flint, released *Leave It All Behind* through his independent company, Nicolay Music/The Foreign Exchange. Despite modest publicity via a few respectful online reviews and banner ads on indie-soul friendly networks like Fusicology.com, Phonte says "the demand for it has been high." It has sold nearly 20,000 copies, solid numbers for a solid indie release.

This unusual (albeit increasingly common) approach to issuing *Leave It All Behind* has only enhanced its intrinsic preciousness. For all its depth, the Foreign Exchange's

music is very slick and clean. One of Nicolay's inspirations is Coldplay, which has reduced U2 arena rock theatrics to a hard science. Yet Nicolay's music isn't as cold; it burns with intensity. People who listen to *Leave It All Behind* without someone to hold them may feel weird and self-conscious.

Neither Phonte nor Nicolay can explain why they're drawn to such lush soul. But they won't apologize for it, either. "It seems to be a recurring theme throughout my career," Phonte says. "Those positive vibrations ... it just makes me feel good." **SFBG**

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MUSIC

Pinch me, I'm melting. Clockwise from left: Mary Anne Hobbs leads the way at 103 Harriet, Kingdom finds focus, Miss Honey Dijon works, and Triple Threat DJs look ahead.

MARY ANNE HOBBS PHOTO BY SHAUN BLOODWORTH



Hobbs knobbin'

By Marke B

superego@sfbg.com

SUPER EGO "My mission is progression," says BBC 1 Radio's *Experimental Show* host DJ and left-field electronic music goddess Mary Anne Hobbs.

"Everything should point to the future. If there's any reason I'm here, it's to build new causeways beyond classic sounds toward symbiotic textures. I cannot hang in suspended animation."

Hobbs is on the horn from Britain, and her droll Lancashire accent and signature breathy enthusiasm, combined with my wet-pantsed fanboy palpitations, is making it hard for me to keep up. I'm *gushy*, y'all. Because basically Mary Anne Hobbs is one of the coolest people on the planet, not only dedicating her considerable charisma to bringing challenging sounds to a wider audience and galvanizing a disparate community of bedroom knob-fiddlers — but also able to instantly conversation-hop from Kawasaki motorcycles (she's made a multipart documentary about riding through Russia) to late Bay jazz oracle Alice Coltrane (the title of Hobbs' excellent new Planet Mu platter of twisted audio thrills, *Wild Angels*, was inspired by a meditation on harpist Coltrane's "cosmic arpeggios.")

Although she's been closely associated with dubstep and future bass, Hobbs eschews core genre sounds, yet she recognizes her role in helping dubstep become such a mainstream phenomenon in her native land. "I look after my small country of artists, and if extraordinary talents like Benga or Burial break through, I'm enormously pleased. But there's still so much out there."

Hobbs laughs when I mention her maternal reputation, but when I bring up the glaring invisibility of women on the scene, she says, "People just aren't looking in the right places," and launches into a list of about 20 favorite females, including Vaccine, Blank Blue, and Ikonika before deftly nipping my typical American multiculti soapboxing in the bud. "I think many of these artists prefer not to be viewed through the prism of sexuality."

Wild Angels, Hobbs' third compilation, moves away from dark dubstep toward the esoteric, sticky-starlight synth sound of Scotland's LuckyMe collective (represented here by Hudson Mohawke, Mike Slott, and Rustie) with some West Coast rep coming from Nosaj Thing. More Cali cuts may make it onto future releases. "I'm so excited to be spinning in California again," Hobbs says. "The energy is incredible. I really feel that's where it's at right now." Agreed!

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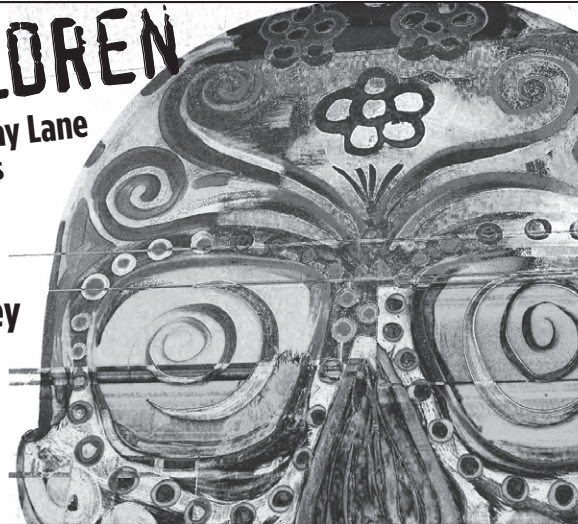
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10/10 TOWER OF POWER
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10/31 & 11/1 BUILT TO SPILL
11/2 THE AIRBORNE TOXIC EVENT
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11/6 DINOSAUR JR.
11/8 SAOSIN / P.O.S.
11/13 THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS
11/14 THE MOUNTAIN GOATS
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11/27 TOOTS & THE MAYTALS
12/1, 2, 4, 5 & 6 THE BLACK CROWES
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Jesus and Mary Chain meet Mary Wells through the sound of Vivian Girls, who are vying to be the leader of the current pack of 1960s-meets-late-1980s guitar pop. Mark Lanegan is back and *Broken* with Soulsavers.

VIVIAN GIRLS PHOTO BY OLLY HEARSEY



FRIENDING THE LOVEMAKERS

Scott Blonde and Lisa Light of Oakland's Lovemakers could give a fun, breezy university course in pop — or so I gathered hanging out with the friendly exes at Amoeba Music not long ago, on assignment for the late mag *Venus*. Michael Jackson had just passed, and the pair praised the *Bad* boy's breed of pop — something the duo scrambled to bottle on its catchy new *Let's Be Friends*. "There's no guessing what it is and whether it works — that's what I'm really striving for," Blonde says of Jackson's chart-topping sound. "I think that's the ultimate goal. I can dance to it and sing to it, and it's stuck in my head. It's hard to do, and there's only a handful of bands that have done that." For the new album, which the Lovemakers decided to release themselves via Fontana distribution, Light explains, "We changed our attitude a lot, too. I feel like we always have to come back around and realized, *Right. It's about the music*. It sounds stupid, but I think we really let go of the business side affecting us. It's not that we're not doing it — we're still doing it all. But it doesn't piss me off anymore: it's just a process — it's not personal anymore. Music is personal, and business isn't." **SFBG**

With Jonas Reinhardt, Lisa Nola, and DJ Miles. Fri/11, 9 p.m., \$15–\$17. Independent, 628 Divisadero, SF. www.theindependentsf.com

She's a rebel

By Kimberly Chun
kimberly@sfbg.com

SONIC REDUCER Shop girls and Shop Assistants, the Jesus and Mary Chain and Mary Wells, "Da Doo Ron Ron" and Ronettes up-dos. All twirl, as if at a punk-rock sock-hop, around the rugged, vulnerable Vivian Girls. Girl-group songwriter Ellie Greenwich — tragically felled by a heart attack at 68 on Aug. 26 — might have scratched her head upon first hearing the Brooklyn trio's new *Everything Goes Wrong* (In the Red), out just this week, but a few songs in, she would get it, fully.

Behind the buzzsaw guitars and lo-fi clatter lie those eternal heart-aches, stress-outs, and boy (or girl) troubles that plague every girl, voiced in loose-knit choral togetherness in a way that the Crystals would recognize. The high-drama-mama beats of "Tension" — so reminiscent of "Be My Baby" — hammer the point home, while buttressed by a wall of distortion that Greenwich collaborator Phil Spector could claim as his own.

Onetime Spector client Joey Ramone would have also understood, though Vivian Girls are definitely fixed in a specific girly universe, one forged with the naiveté implied in the

threesome's Henry Darger-derived name as well as the band's blunt force attack, fed by early punk's reclaiming of pop. The Pains of Being Pure at Heart and the Darlings — fellow New Yorkers and kindred spirits in twee and garage rock — have a more purposeful grasp of the hook. But Vivian Girls are more infatuated with a purely impure coupling of classic '60s-derived songcraft — a love that finds its name in "Can't Get Over You" amid blatantly Shangri-Las-style ooh-oohs — and the one-two-three-four overdrive of American hardcore. Musically they're trying on the Peter Pan-collar of the tender-hearted Tess on the sidelines of "He's a Rebel" and the black leather of the reckless tough referred to in the song's title.

Taking note of perverse souls who have tried on those retro costumes in the past, Vivian Girls use hardcore's louder-faster-harder heritage as a way to blitzkrieg the ballroom and navigate the storms of girlhood. So the band's "I Have No Fun" is both more wistful and brisker than the Stooges' "No Fun." Of course, any combo that has the audacity to pick up where Carole King-and-Gerry Goffin-penned "He Hit Me (It Felt Like a Kiss)" left off has much to account for: no one will be pushing around these lasses, swathed in a protective, propulsive whirlwind of thrashed-at guitars and primal

drums. And Vivian Girls never let up till the closing track, "Before I Start to Cry," when the tempo slows and the thunder clouds tumble into view. It's crying time. **SFBG**

VIVIAN GIRLS

With the Beets and Grass Widow
Wed/9, 7:30 p.m., \$12–\$14
Rickshaw Stop
155 Fell, SF
rickshawstop.com

BABIES, MAYBE?

SOULSAVERS

Mark Lanegan growls malevolently on the alternately lyrical and brooding *Broken* (V2). With Jonneine Zapata and Redghost. Wed/9, 8 p.m., \$18. Independent, 628 Divisadero, SF. www.theindependentsf.com

POWER TO THE PEACEFUL FESTIVAL

Michael Franti and Spearhead lay down the welcome mat for Sly and Robbie, an acoustic Alanis Morissette, and Vieux Farka Toure, then take it indoors for a Saturday night afterparty at the Fillmore and some Sunday workshops. Sat/12, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., free. Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, SF. powertothepeaceful.org

NO BABIES

No breeding, just a Morlock-taking noise barrage when the East Bay four are in the nursery. With 2Up and Afternoon Brother. Tues/15, 9 p.m., \$6. Hemlock Tavern, 1131 Polk, SF. www.hemlocktavern.com



Bad Brains

» **PREVIEW** Most Bad Brains fans can remember where they were the first time they heard the DC hardcore legends' self-titled debut (ROIR, 1982.) For me, it was during an extended drive through Utah with my parents, a trip made memorable by a fortuitous stop at a strip mall with a Sam Goody. (My *Damaged* story is a lot cooler, I swear.) The album did nothing to improve my PMA during the car ride, but I vividly remember finding Bad Brains' sheer unhinged speediness awe-inspiring, and not a little disorienting. Though somewhat of a cliché at this point, it bears repeating that *Bad Brains* — all 34 breakneck minutes of it — started an arms race of speed and aggression that would germinate into the hardcore movement. The other side to the record, however, was the handful of incongruous reggae/dub tracks, measured interruptions to the album's typical rock 'n' roll onslaught. By their third album, *I Against I* (SST, 1986), Bad Brains had begun mixing the two genres more fluidly, resulting in what would become the band's trademark style.

Aside from establishing themselves as genre pioneers too singular for flat-out imitation, Bad Brains have also gained the reputation of being some of rock's most volatile live performers, with all the pros and cons that title carries. Stories of vocalist (or "throat," as he's memorably identified as in the liner notes) H.R.'s epileptic stage presence are the stuff of punk rock folklore, making concerts unpredictable affairs to be sure. Lucky for us, he'll be anchored by the original lineup: Darryl Jennifer on bass, Earl Hudson on drums, Dr. Know on guitar, natch. Our Summer rager-mode has deactivated; it's time for reignition. **(Tony Papanikolas)**

BAD BRAINS With P.O.S., Trouble Andrew. Tues/15–Wed/16, 8 p.m. (doors 7 p.m.), \$26. Slim's, 333 11th St. (415) 255-0333. www.slims-sf.com.

Music listings are compiled by Paula Connelly and Cheryl Eddy. Since club life is unpredictable, it's a good idea to call ahead to confirm bookings and hours. Prices are listed when provided to us. Submit items at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

WEDNESDAY 9

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Suki Ewers, Jack Tung, Westbrooklin Elbo Room. 9pm, \$5.
Glaxo Fillmore. 8pm, \$45.
Hank IV, Cheap Girls, Grabass Charlestons Thee Parkside. 8pm, \$6.
Hedgehog, Queen Sea Big Shark, Casino Demon Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, \$10. Benefit for China AIDS Orphan Fund.
Jacopo, Eggplant Casino, Micropixie Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$10.
Cass McCombs, Papercuts, Girls Great American Music Hall. 9pm, \$16.
Soulsavers feat. **Mark Lanegan, Jonneine Zapata, Redghost** Independent. 8pm, \$18.
Earl Thomas unplugged Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$16.
Vivian Girls, Beets Rickshaw Stop. 8pm, \$14.

BAY AREA

Yeah Yeah Yeahs Fox Theater. 8pm, \$35.50.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Ben Marcato and the Mondo Combo Top of the Mark. 7:30pm, \$10.
"B3 Wednesdays" Coda. 9pm, \$7. Featuring Amendola vs. Blades.

Jack Curtis Dubrowsky Ensemble Meridian Gallery, 535 Powell, SF; (415) 398-7229. 7:30pm, \$10.
9th Wonder with Broun Fellinis, Tyler Woods Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, \$25.
Tin Cup Serenade Le Colonial, 20 Cosmo Place, SF; (415) 931-3600. 7pm, free.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Folk and Latin Night Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8pm, 9:30; \$12.
Foolproof Four Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

DANCE CLUBS

Booty Call Q-Bar, 456 Castro; www.bootycallwednesdays.com. 9pm. Juanita Moore hosts this dance party, featuring DJ Robot Hustle.
Hands Down! Bar on Church. 9pm, free. With DJs Claksaarb, Mykill, and guests spinning indie, electro, house, and bangers.
Jam Wednesday Infusion Lounge. 10pm, free. DJ Slick Dee.
Open Mic Night 330 Ritch. 9pm, \$7.
Qool 111 Minna Gallery. 5-10pm, \$5. Pan-techno lounge with DJs Spesh, Gil, Hyper D, and Jondi.
RedWine Social Dalva. 9pm-2am, free. DJ TophOne and guests spin outernational funk and get drunk.
Respect Wednesdays End Up. 10pm, \$5. Rotating DJs Lonestar Sound, Young Fyah, Sake One, Serg, and more spinning reggae, dancehall, roots, lovers rock, and mash ups.
Synchronize Il Pirata, 2007 16th St.; (415) 626-2626. 10pm, free. Psychedelic dance music with DJs Helios, Gatto Matto, Psy Lotus, Intergalactoid, and guests.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 34 »

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BENJAMIN WINTER
& THE MAKE BELIEVE
Silver Darling
+special guest

SATURDAY, 9/12 · 9 PM \$8 TIX AT TICKETWEB
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SUNDAY, 9/13 · 8 PM \$7
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Jake Allen
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THE GUARDIAN & BOOKS, INC. PRESENT



The Guardian presents its first Writer's Issue on October 7 -- and we want **you** to be part of it! Whether you're a **professional** scribe or a **random** Twitterer, you could win one of 10 gift certificates courtesy of BOOKS, INC.!

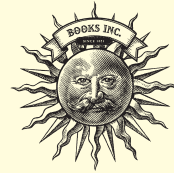
HERE'S HOW:

Submit a story -- fiction or nonfiction, poetry also accepted -- that expresses some aspect of life in the Bay Area in exactly **123 words**. The Guardian's Arts and Culture editors will pick out their **10 favorites** to print in our October 7th Writer's Issue, and the winners will each receive a **Books, Inc. gift certificate**.

DEADLINE

for entries is **Tuesday, September 22**, so get your inner **Jack Kerouac a-crackin'**.

Send your submissions in the body of an email to culture@sfbg.com with Lit123 in the subject line. Include your name (noms des plumes OK) and city.



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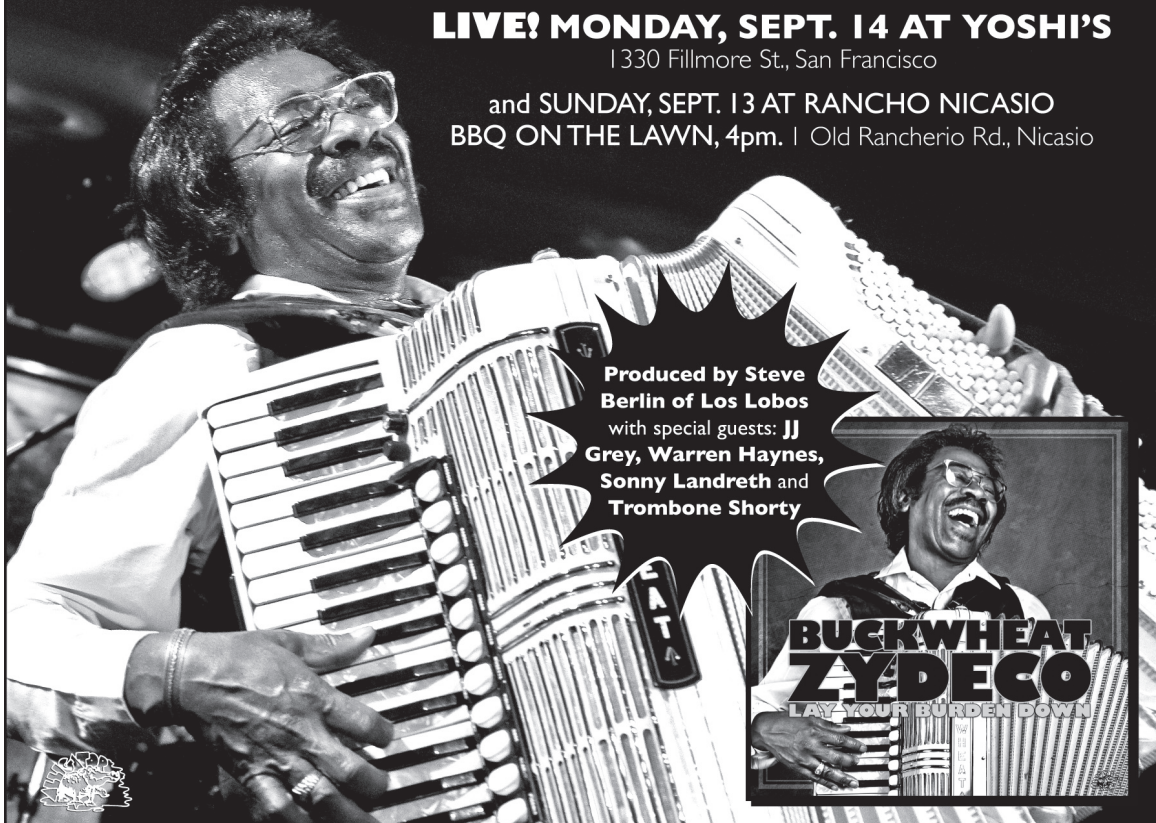
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THURSDAY 10

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Brendan Benson Great American Music Hall. 8pm, \$18.
Doobie Brothers, Lara Johnston Fillmore. 8pm, \$59.50.
Joey Fender Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$15.
Fire Child, Via Coma, Orchestra of Antlers, Major US Cities Rickshaw Stop. 7:30pm, \$10.
40-Love, Park, Whooligan Café du Nord. 8pm, \$10.
Health, Mi Ami, Pictureplane Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, \$14.
Necrite, Fell Voices, Altar of Extinction Annie's Social Club. 8pm, \$6.

Obituary, Goatwhore, Krisiun, Berzerker Slim's. 7:30pm, \$30.
Perpetual Groove, Hill Country Revue Independent. 9pm, \$15.
Sex Type Thing Red Devil Lounge. 9pm, \$10.
Winter's Fall, Telegraph Canyon, Manzanita Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$7.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Kenny Brooks Coda. 9pm, \$7.
Eric Kurtzrock Trio Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; (415) 771-6800. 7:30pm, free.
"Hotplate" Amnesia. 8pm, \$5. With Terrence Brewer playing Wes Montgomery.
Marlina Teich Trio Brickhouse, 426 Brannan, SF; (415) 820-1595. 7-10pm, free.
"Music by the Eye: Inventions in Visual Audio" Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market, SF; www.illuminatedcorridor.com. 8pm, \$6-10. With Ian

Winters and Evelyn Ficarra, Bill Hsu and Moe! Staiano, and Tim Perkins.
Stompy Jones Top of the Mark. 7:30pm, \$10.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Flamenco Thursday Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8pm, 9:30; \$12. With Carola Zertuche and Company.
Jorind Josemans Red Poppy Art House. 7pm, \$12-15.
Amy Obenski Caffè Trieste, 601 Vallejo, SF; (415) 392-6739. 8pm.
Savannah Blu Atlas Café. 8pm, free.
Shannon Céilí Band Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

DANCE CLUBS

Afrolicious Elbo Room. 9:30pm, \$5-6. DJs Pleasuremaker, Señor Oz, J Elrod, and B Lee spin Afrobeat, Tropicália, electro, samba, and funk.

CakeMIX SF Wish, 1539 Folsom, SF. 10pm, free. DJ Carey Kopp spinning funk, soul, and hip hop.
Caribbean Connection Little Baobab, 3388 19th St; 643-3558. 10pm, \$3. DJ Stevie B and guests spin reggae, soca, zouk, reggaetón, and more.
Drop the Pressure Underground SF. 6-10pm, free. Electro, house, and datafunk highlight this weekly happy hour.
Funky Rewind Skylark. 9pm, free. DJ Kung Fu Chris, MAKossa, and rotating guest DJs spin heavy funk breaks, early hip-hop, boogie, and classic Jamaican riddims.
Heat Icon Ultra Lounge. 10pm, free. Hip-hop, R&B, reggae, and soul.
Kick It Bar on Church. 9pm. Hip-hop with DJ Jorge Terez.
Kissing Booth Make Out Room. 9pm, free. DJs Jory, Commodore 69, and more spinning indie dance, disco, 80's, and electro.
Koko Puffs Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-

4788. 10pm, free. Dubby roots reggae and Jamaican funk from rotating DJs.
Mestiza Bollywood Café, 3376 19th St., SF; (415) 970-0362. 10pm, free. Showcasing progressive Latin and global beats with DJ Juan Data.
Motion Sickness Vertigo, 1160 Polk; (415) 674-1278. 10pm, free. Genre-bending dance party with DJs Sneaky P, Public Frenemy, and D_Ro Cyclist.
Popscene 330 Rich. 10pm, \$10. Rotating DJs spinning indie, Britpop, electro, new wave, and post-punk.
Toppa Top Thursdays Club Six. 9pm, \$5. Jah Warrior, Jah Yzer, I-Vier, and Irie Dole spin the reggae jams for your maximum irie-ness.
We All We Got Blue Macaw, 2565 Mission, SF; (415) 920-0577. 9pm, \$10. A showcase of emerging, independent artists featuring Sellassie, J. Lately, Lil Paris & Strong, H.W.Y., and more.

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THURSDAY • SEPTEMBER 10 • 6PM
VIVIAN GIRLS
 Swirling noise-loving Brooklynites the Vivian Girls' sophomore album *Everything Goes Wrong* hits the shelves on 9/9. Whilst the girls have again captured their raw, fun edge, it is a darker, moodier album than its predecessor. Also catch them at the Rickshaw Stop on 9/9!

TUESDAY • SEPTEMBER 15 • 6PM
GIRLS
 Built on the powerful song writing of Christopher Owens & the production of Chet "JR" White, Girls recorded *Album* in a variety of bedrooms & rehearsal studios in San Francisco. It's the perfect SF summer record, evoking a narcotic, sunny afternoon in Dolores Park. *Album* will be available at Amoeba SF one week early on 9/15!

FRIDAY • SEPTEMBER 18 • 6PM
THE DODOS
 With the title *Time to Die*, out 9/15, you might think The Dodos 3rd album will be deadly serious, punctuated by strings & synths. Nice try, but you've got it wrong. The Dodos are wildly percussive. You'll hear an occasional horn blast, but it never distracts from the riffs & rolls.

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THURSDAY • SEPTEMBER 17 • 6PM
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 age: ALL

HEALTH
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FRI SEP 11
 DOOR 8:30
 \$10
 age: 21+

PIRATE CAT RADIO presents...
MY REVOLVER
ZODIAC DEATH VALLEY
THE DEAD WESTERNS

SAT SEP 12
 DOOR 8:30
 \$12
 age: 21+

ELLIOT RANDALL
GINA VILLALOBOS
JAMES DEPRATO
AND THE DIPTET

SUN SEP 13
 DOOR 7:30
 \$10/\$12
 age: ALL

THE HONORARY TITLE
GOOD OLD WAR
CORY BRANAN

TUE SEP 15
 DOOR 8:30
 \$10/\$12
 age: ALL

JOEY CAPE
Lagwagon
JON SNODGRASS
Drag The River
CHAD REX

WED 9/16
 Excuses for Skipping • Mister Loveless
CHAIRLIFT
 Magic Bullets • El Ten Eleven

FRI 9/18
 Pansy Division • Paul Collins Beat

SAT 9/19
 AMAZING BABY
 THE ENTRANCE BAND • Total Hound

SUN 9/20
 Royal Bangs • The Actors

MON 9/21
 TITUS ANDRONICUS
 The So So Glos • The Relatives

TUE 9/22
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Obituary

➤ **PREVIEW** Inevitable vocal chord-corrosion aside, many of death metal's earliest bands have managed to stay exciting for a remarkably long time. Working within a genre that tends to shift toward increasingly challenging frontiers, an elite corps of older acts seems to find inspiration in recent innovations, or, conversely, forgotten older tropes due for a nostalgic revisiting. So how do we account for the enduring relevance of Obituary, a group known for its unwavering devotion to metal at its most primal essence?

Obituary's legend began in Florida, 1985. Playing under the somewhat hokey moniker of Xecutioner (imagine how badass that would look scrawled in a spiral bound notebook) the band soon rechristened itself with its current *nom de metal*, and released a string of landmark records. With *Slowly We Rot* (Roadrunner, 1989), Obituary introduced a heavy bottom end stomp to the still-nebulous genre, a rancid meatiness that imbued its thrash metal foundation with Sabbath-like authority. On standout cuts like "Intoxicated," Donald Tardy's punky upbeats propel the crunchy bass and rhythm guitar forward with manic intensity — before plunging them into one of the single greatest breakdowns ever recorded, a dumbass berzerker groove unmatched in hypnotic power. (Gorilla Biscuits' "Big Mouth" [from *Gorilla Biscuits*, Revelation, 1988] and, perhaps, Suffocation's "Liege of Inveracity" [from *Effigy of the Forgotten*, Roadrunner, 1991] come close.)

Obituary has consistently explored the power of steamroller directness laid down in the musical DNA of its first release, allowing monolithic power chords to resonate in ways a thousand sweep-pick solos and orchestral flourishes — full of sound and fury but signifying nothing, as the poet says — never could. Oh, and John Tardy's voice? Just as offensive as always. **(Tony Papanikolas)**

OBITUARY With Goatwhore, Krisiun, The Berzerker. Thurs/10, 7:30 p.m. (doors 7 p.m.),

\$28–\$30, all ages. Slim's, 333 11th St., SF. (415) 255-0333. www.slims-sf.com



FRIDAY 11

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Bare Wires, Blood Drained Cows, Vows Hemlock Tavern. 9:30pm, \$7.
Doobie Brothers, Lara Johnston Fillmore. 8pm, \$59.50.
Glenn Labs, Dubious Ranger, Barbary Coasters Rasselas Jazz. 9pm, \$10.
Hot Buttered Rum, Jerry Hannan Band Great American Music Hall. 9pm, \$20.
DJ Lebowitz Madrone. 6pm, free.
Lovemakers, Jonas Reinhardt, Lisa Nola Independent. 9pm, \$16.
Morning After Girls, Asteroid #4, Citadelle, Fauna Valetta Knockout. 9pm, \$7.
My Revolver, Zodiac Death Valley, Dead Westerns Bottom of the Hill. 10pm, \$10.

Elbo Room

WED 9/9 9PM \$5	ELBO ROOM PRESENTS SUKI EWERS (OF MAZZY STAR & OPEL), JACK TUNG, WESTBROOKLIN (FEATURING ANNIE LIN)
THU 9/10 9:30PM \$5 B4 11 \$6 AFTER	AFRO-TROPI ELECTRIC- SAMBA-FUNK AFROLICIOUS WITH DIS/HOSTS: PLEASUREMAKER & SENOR OZ, PLUS RESIDENTS J ELROD & B LEE
FRI 9/11 6:30-9PM SLIDING SCALE \$5-\$20	LITERARY DEATH MATCH WITH READERS: NORIA JABLONSKI, TRACY CLARK-FLORY, EUGENIA E. GRATTO AND JACK BOULWARE AND JUDGES: ELISSA BASSIST, DAN KLEIN, STACEY LEWIS
SAT 9/12 9PM \$5 B4 11 \$10 AFTER	FREE FUNK FRIDAY PRESENTS TREAT 'EM RIGHT WITH DJS VINNIE ESPARZA (HELLA TIGHT), B-CAUSE (4ONEFUNK) & GUESTS DJ ANONYMOUS (HELSINKI, FINLAND), MATTHEW AFRICA (OAKLAND/KALX)
SUN 9/13 9PM \$6	DUB MISSION: THE BEST IN DUB, DUBSTEP, ROOTS & DANCEHALL WITH DJ SEP VINNIE ESPARZA (HELLA TIGHT/DIS-JOINT), & J BOOGIE (DUBTRONIC SCIENCE/OM RECORDS)
MON 9/14 9PM \$13/\$15	ELBO ROOM PRESENTS POJAMA PEOPLE FEAT. IKE WILLIS PLAY THE MUSIC OF FRANK ZAPPA
TUE 9/15 9PM \$8	BOMBHELL BETTY & FROMAGIQUE PRESENT "FROMAGIQUE" CD RELEASE AND BURLESQUE SHOW MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES: ODESSA LIL, ADVANCE TIX: WWW.BOMBHELLBETTY.NET/CD.HTML

UPCOMING

THU 9/17 AFROLICIOUS

FRI 9/18 BROWNOUT (MEMBERS OF GRUPO FANTASMA)

SAT 9/19 SAT NITE SOUL PARTY

SUN 9/20 DUB MISSION: DJ SEP

ADV TIX: WWW.BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM

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Neverland: A Tribute to the King of Pop, Club 90 Slim's. 9pm, \$18.
Raw Deluxe Coda. 10pm, \$10.
Johnny Rawls Biscuits and Blues. 8 and 10pm, \$20.
Welcome Home Walker, Saucy Jacks, Parties Annie's Social Club. 6-9pm, \$6.

BAY AREA

Flogging Molly, Hepcat, Fitz and the Tantrums Fox Theater. 8pm, \$29.50.
Hooks, La Plebe Uptown. 9pm, \$10.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Audium 9 1616 Bush, SF; (415) 771-1616. 8:30pm, \$15.
Bad Plus Yoshi's San Francisco. 8 and 10pm, \$21.
Black Market Jazz Orchestra Top of the Mark. 9pm, \$10.
"Cultural Encounters: Friday Nights at the

deYoung presents Jazz at Intersection Wilsey Court, de Young Museum, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Dr, SF; www.deyoungmuseum.org. 6:30pm, free. With VidyA.
Eric Kurtzrock Trio Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; 771-6800. 8pm, free.
JFJO (Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey) Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$15.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Burning Embers Plough and Stars. 9pm.
Cuban Nights Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF (415) 646-0018. 8:30pm; \$15. With Fito Reinosc and Eddie and Gabriel Navia, and Latin dancing Buena Vista style.
Jezzebel and Jinx Blackthorn Irish Pub, 834 Irving, SF; (415) 564-6627. 8pm.
Kitka and Kostroma St. Gregory of Nyssa Church. CONTINUES ON PAGE 36 >>

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SEAN KINGSTON FLO RIDA NEW BOYZ JAICKO OCTOBER 12
THE POGUES DEVOTCHKA SEAN WHEELER & ZANDER SCHLOSS OCTOBER 13
MOBY KELLY SCARR OCTOBER 15
BOB SAGET ON SALE SUNDAY! OCTOBER 16
HEART OCTOBER 22
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FRI/11 FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY CONT>>

500 DeHaro, SF; (415) 255-8100. 8pm, \$25.
World Music Night Union Room, 2nd floor, 401 Mason, SF; (415) 292-2583. 8pm, \$10. A tribute to the human spirit on the anniversary of 9/11.
Rennea Couttenye Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, \$12-15.
VidyA Wilsey Court, de Young, Golden Gate Park, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden, SF; (415) 750-3600. 6:30pm, free.
Benjamin Winter and the Make Believe Hotel Utah. 9pm, \$7.

DANCE CLUBS

Activate! Lookout, 3600 16th St; (415) 431-0306.

9pm, \$3. Face your demigods and demons at this Red Bull-fueled party.
Alcoholocaust Presents Riptide Tavern. 9pm, free. DJ What's His Fuck spins old-school punk rock and other gems.
Bar on Church 9pm. Rotating DJs Zax, Zhaldee, and Nuxx.
Blow Up Knockout. 10pm, \$10-15. Electro-disco-noir nightclub with DJ Jefrodisiac and Ava Berlin.
Exhale, Fridays Project One Gallery, 251 Rhode Island; (415) 465-2129. 5pm, \$5. Happy hour with art, fine food, and music with Vin Sol, King Most, DJ Centipede, and Shane King.
Fat Stack Fridays Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary, SF; (415) 885-4788. 10pm, free. With rotating DJs Romanowski, B-Love, Tomas, Toph One, and Vinnie Esparza.
Fo' Sho! Fridays Madrone. 10pm, \$5. DJs Kung Fu Chris, Makossa, and Quickee Mart spin rare grooves, soul, funk, and hip-hop classics.

Free Funk Friday presents **Treat 'em Right** Elbo Room. 10pm, \$5. With DJs Vinnie Esparza, B-Cause, Anonymous, and Matthew Africa.
Gay Asian Paradise Club Eight, 1151 Folsom, SF; www.eightsf.com. 9pm, \$8. Featuring two dance floors playing dance and hip hop, smoking patio, and 2 for 1 drinks before 10pm.
Gymnasium Stud. 10pm, \$5. With DJs Violent Vickie and guests spinning electro, disco, rap, and 90s dance and featuring performers, gymnastics, jump rope, drink specials, and more.
Look Out Weekend Bambuddha Lounge. 4pm, free. Drink specials, food menu and resident DJs White Girl Lust, Swayzee, Philie Ocean, and more.
Lovebuzz Annie's Social Club. 10pm, \$5. DJs Jawa and Melody Nelson spin punk, classic rock, and 90s tunes.
M4M Fridays Underground SF. 10pm-2am. Joshua J and Frankie Sharp host this man-tastic party.
Punk Rock and Shlock Karaoke Annie's Social

Club. 9pm-2am, \$5. Eileen and Jody bring you songs from multiple genres to butcher: punk, new wave, alternative, classic rock, and more.

SATURDAY 12

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Michael Franti Fillmore. 9pm, \$35.
Glitter Wizard, Groggs, Dirty Cupcakes Hemlock Tavern. 9:30pm, \$7.
Honey Brothers, Soko, His Orchestra Independent. 9pm, \$15.
Hot Buttered Rum, Nicki Bluhm Band Great American Music Hall. 9pm, \$20.
Jackie Payne and Steve Edmonson Band Biscuits and Blues. 8 and 10pm, \$20.
Elliot Randall, Gina Villalobos, James DePrato and the Diptet Bottom of the Hill. 10pm, \$12.

Owen Roberts and the Doghouse Brewer, Nomi, Shure Thing Hotel Utah. 9pm, \$8.
Southern Culture on the Skids, Los Straitjackets Slim's. 9pm, \$18.

BAY AREA

"Great American Blues and BBQ Festival" Fourth St between A and Cijos, San Rafael; proevent@aol.com. 11am, free. With Sugar Pie DeSanto and Charlie Musselwhite.
Killers, New York Dolls Shoreline Amphitheater, One Amphitheater Pkwy, Mtn View; www.livenation.com. 7:30pm, \$41-81.
Paolo Nutini Fox Theater. 8pm, \$25.
Revtones, Mighty Slim Pickens, Blue Diamond Fillups Uptown. 9pm, \$10.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Audium 9 1616 Bush, SF; (415) 771-1616. 8:30pm, \$15.



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2:00 PM—5:00 PM

ROSH HASHANAH DAY TWO

Sunday, Sept. 20
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Family Service:

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YOM KIPPUR—KOL NIDRE

Sunday, Sept. 27
6:45 PM—9:00 PM

YOM KIPPUR

Monday, Sept. 28
2:30 PM—5:00 PM
(Yizkor Service 3:15 PM)

Mincha/Neila 5:00 PM—7:37 PM

Children's Ed. Program:

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Ticket prices: \$250 (includes all services.)
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Aram Danesh and the Superhuman Crew Coda. 10pm, \$10.

Eric Kurtzrock Trio Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli Square, 891 Beach, SF; (415) 771-6800. 8pm, free.

Foreign Exchange Yoshi's San Francisco. 11:59, \$25.

Ricardo Scales Top of the Mark. 9pm, \$10.
Karen Segal Simple Pleasures, 3434 Balboa, SF; (415) 387-4022. 8pm, free.

Lavay Smith and Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers Café du Nord. 9pm, \$15.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Carnaval Del Sur Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 8pm, \$15.

Helladelics Red Poppy Art House. 8pm, \$10-15.
Jezzebel and **Jinx** Coffee Adventures, 1331 Columbus, SF; (415) 441-0301. 11am; Epicenter

Café, 764 Harrison, SF; (415) 543-5436. 5pm.

DANCE CLUBS

Bar on Church 9pm. Rotating DJs Foxxee, Joseph Lee, Zhaldee, Mark Andrus, and Niuxx.
Cockblock Rickshaw Stop. 10pm, \$7. DJ Nuxx and guests spin at this queer dance party for homos and friends.

HYP Club Eight, 1151 Folsom, SF; www.eightsf.com. 10pm, free. Gay and lesbian hip hop party, featuring DJs spinning the newest in the top 40s hip hop and hyphy.

Same Sex Salsa and Swing Magnet, 4122 18th St., SF; (415) 305-8242. 7pm, free.

So Special Club Six. 9pm, \$5. DJ Dans One and guests spinning dancehall, reggae, classics, and remixes.

Spirit Fingers Sessions 330 Ritch. 9pm, free. With DJ Morse Code and live guest performances.

Summer Saturdays Bar On Church. 9pm, free.

With DJ Mark Andrus spinning top 40, mashups, hip hop, and electro.

Tormenta Tropical Elbo Room. 10pm, \$5-10. With Kingdon, Disco Shawn, and Oro11.

SUNDAY 13

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Slaid Cleaves Great American Music Hall. 8pm, \$15.

Damnweevil, **Mendoza**, **Litany for the Whale**, **Burns Red** Annie's Social Club. 6pm, \$6.

Honorary Title, **Good Old War**, **Cory Brannan** Bottom of the Hill. 8pm, \$12.

Japanther, **Ninjasnik**, **Unit Breed** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, \$7.

Kevin Russell Biscuits and Blues. 8pm, \$15.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Bad Plus Yoshi's San Francisco. 2 and 7pm, \$5-21.

Lucid Lovers Harris' Restaurant, 2100 Van Ness, SF; (415) 673-1888. 6:30pm.

Rob Modica and friends Simple Pleasures, 3434 Balboa, SF; (415) 387-4022. 3pm, free.

"SfSoundseries" ODC Dance Commons, Studio B, 351 Shotwell, SF; (415) 863-9834. 8pm, \$10.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Enanitos Verdes Fillmore. 8pm, \$42.50.

Fiesta Andina! Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF; (415) 646-0018. 7pm; \$10.

Glide Ensemble and **the Change Band** Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, 330 Ellis, SF; (415) 674-6000. 5pm, \$15-75.

Jezzebel and **Jinx** Java Beach Café, 1396 La Playa, SF; (415) 665-5282. 7:30pm.

Ritmojito Coda. 8pm, \$7.

John Sherry, Kyle Thayer and friends Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.

Vieux Farka Toure Independent. 8pm, \$20.

DANCE CLUBS

DiscoFunk Mashups Cat Club. 10pm, free. House and 70's music.

Dub Mission Elbo Room. 9pm, \$6. Dub, roots, and classic dancehall with DJs Sep, Vinnie Esparza, and J Boogie.

Gloss Sundays Trigger, 2344 Market, SF; (415) 551-CLUB. 7pm. With DJ Hawthorne spinning house, funk, soul, retro, and disco.

Honey Soundsystem Paradise Lounge. 8pm-2am. "Dance floor for dancers – sound system for lovers." Got that?

Jock! Lookout, 3600 16th; 431-0306. 3pm, \$2.

This high-energy party raises money for LGBT

CONTINUES ON PAGE 39 »



WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 9 9:30PM, NO COVER!
MOD V. ROCKER

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10 8PM
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REVIVAL SOUND SYSTEM 10PM, NO COVER!
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4PM/FREE ALL AGES

UPCOMING SHOWS:

9/17 - *TURBONEGRA, SWITCHBLADE RIOT, MY PARADE*
9/18 - *ICE CREAM SOCIALITES*
9/19 - *AGENT RIBBONS, THE SPLINTERS, THE SAREES*
9/20 - *THE SUBURBAN HOME RECORDS TOUR! AUSTIN LUCAS, TWO COW GARAGE, MIKE HALE*
9/24 - *CORMORANT, VELNIAS, FELL VOICES, ELM*
9/25 - *DEAD TO ME, NOTHINGTON, THE RE-VOLTS, SEMI EVOLVED SIMIANS*
10/7 - *NO USE FOR A NAME, PERFECT MACHINES*
10/10 - *FRISCO FREAKOUT*
10/21 & 10/22 - *THE SPITS, DAVILA 666*
10/23-10/25 - *BUDGET ROCK*
11/3 - *CHINESE STARS, ALL LEATHER*
11/28 - *THE BUSINESS*

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VOWS

GLITTER WIZARD 9:30PM, \$6
THE GROGGS
DIRTY CUPCAKES

MASTER/VOLUME 9PM, \$5
UNIT BREED (PORTLAND)
STREET EATERS

PUNK ROCK SIDESHOW W/ 10PM, FREE
DJ TRAGIC & DUCHESS OF HAZARD

NO BABIES 9PM, \$6
2 UP (JAPAN)
AFTERNOON BROTHER


OH MY GOD (CHICAGO) 9PM, \$7
HIGHWAY PATROL
WAVE ARRAY

RADEMACHER 9PM, \$6
YOUNG HUNTING
THE GOLD MEDALISTS

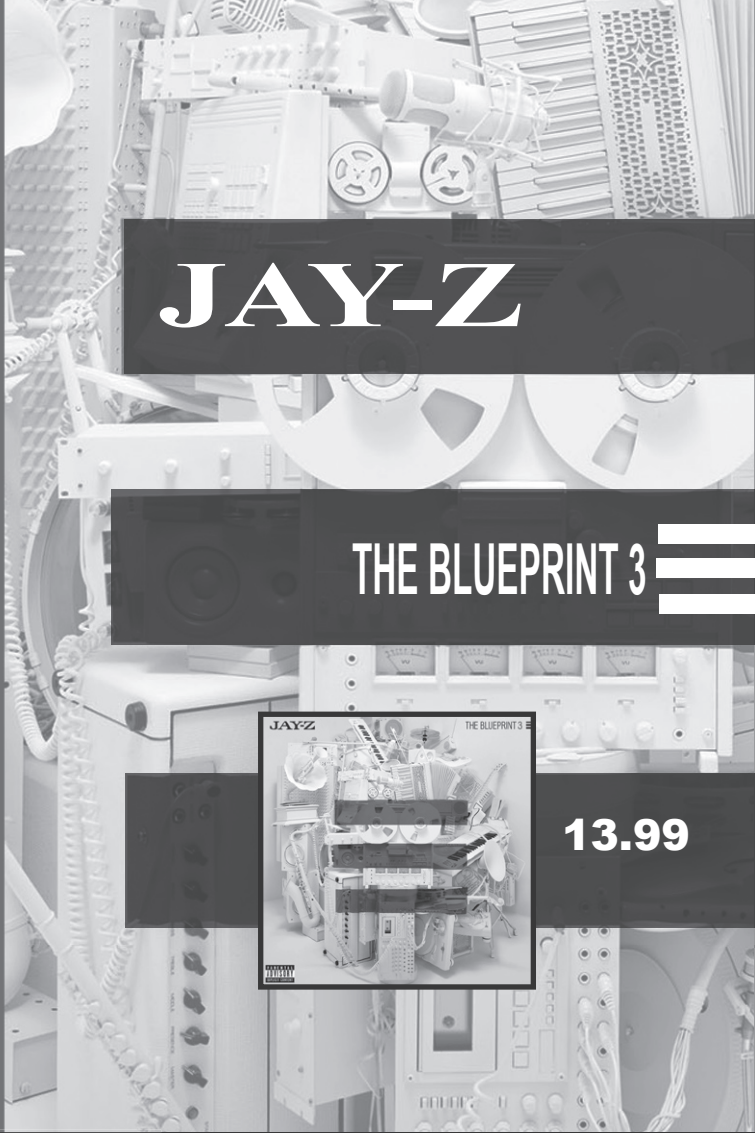
GRAND LAKE 9:30PM, \$6
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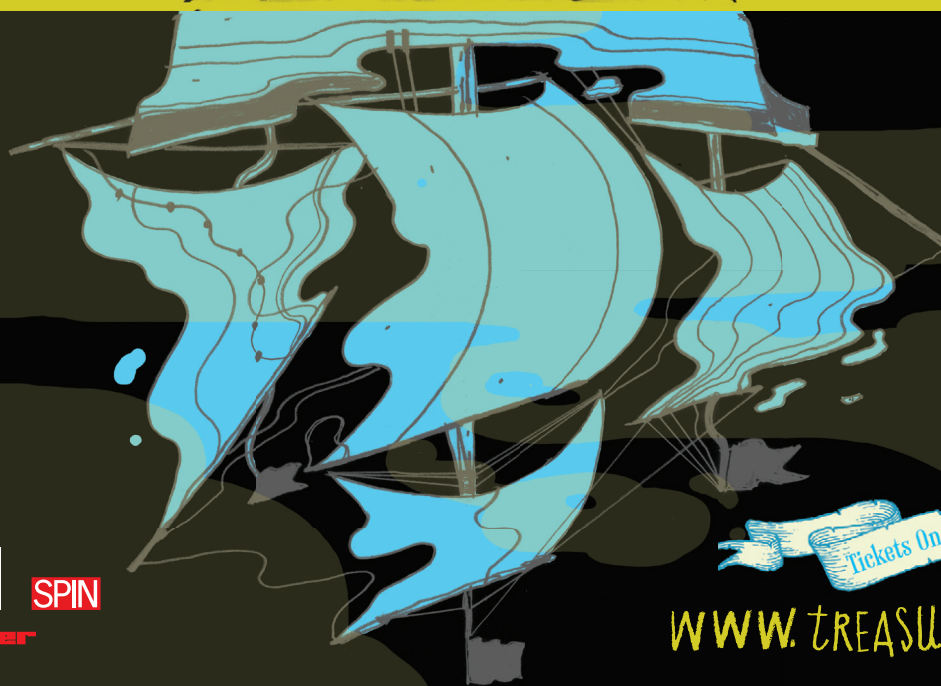
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SUN/13 DANCE CLUBS

CONT>>

sports teams.

Kick It Bar on Church. 9pm. Hip-hop with DJ Zax.**Religion** Bar on Church. 3pm. With DJ Nikita.**Stag** AsiaSF. 6pm, \$5. Gay bachelor parties are the target demo of this weekly erotic tea dance.

MONDAY 14

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Collective Soul, **Black Stone Cherry**, **Ryan Star**
Regency Ballroom. 7:30pm, \$30.**Monks of Doom**, **Penelope Houston Band**
Café du Nord. 9:30pm, \$15.**Pojama People** feat. **Ike Willis** Elbo Room. 9pm,
\$15. Playing the music of Frank Zappa.

DANCE CLUBS

Black Gold Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-
4788. 10pm-2am, free. Senator Soul spins Detroit
soul, Motown, New Orleans R&B, and more — all
on 45!**Going Steady** Dalva. 10pm, free. DJs Amy and
Troy spinning 60's girl groups, soul, garage, and
more.**King of Beats** Tunnel Top. 10pm. DJs J-Roca and
Kool Karlo spinning reggae, electro, boogie, funk,
90's hip hop, and more.**Mainroom Mondays** Annie's Social Club. 9pm,
free. Live the dream: karaoke on Annie's stage and
pretend you're Jello Biafra.**Manic Mondays** Bar on Church. 9pm. Drink 80-cent cosmos with DJs Mark Andrus and Dangerous
Dan.**Monster Show** Underground SF. 10pm, \$5. Cookie
Dough and DJ MC2 make Mondays worth dancing
about, with a killer drag show at 11pm.**Network Mondays** Azul Lounge, One Tillman
Pl; www.inhouselatent.com. 9pm, \$5. Hip-hop,
R&B, and spoken word open mic, plus featured
performers.**Spliff Sessions** Tunnel Top. 10pm, free. DJs
MAKossa, Kung Fu Chris, and C. Moore spin funk,
soul, reggae, hip-hop, and psychedelia on vinyl.

TUESDAY 15

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Bad Brains, **POS**, **Trouble Andrew** Slim's.
8pm, \$26.**Joey Cape**, **Jon Snodgrass**, **Chad Rex** Bottom of
the Hill. 9pm, \$12.**Trevor Hall** Café du Nord. 8pm, \$10.**Mayer Hawthorne and the County**, **Buff 1**, **14kt**,
Cambo Rickshaw Stop. 8pm, \$10.**No Babies**, **2 Up**, **Afternoon Brother** Hemlock
Tavern. 9pm, \$6.**Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros**,
Fool's Gold, **Local Natives**, **DJ Aaron Axelsen**
Independent. 8pm, \$10.**Sugar Ray**, **Dirty Heads**, **Aimee Allen** Regency
Ballroom. 7pm, \$27.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Dave Parker Quintet Rasselaz Jazz. 8pm.**Hyim** Yoshi's San Francisco. 8pm, \$15.**"Jazz Mafia Tuesdays"** Coda. 9pm, \$7. Featuring
Shotgun Wedding Quintet.**Ricardo Scales** Top of the Mark. 6:30pm, \$5.

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Kitten on the Keys Climate Theater, 285 Ninth St.
SF; (415) 704-3260. 8pm, \$7-15.**Barry O'Connell**, **Vinnie Cronin and friends**
Plough and Stars. 9pm, free.**Slow Session** Plough and Stars. 9pm, free. With
Michael Duffy and friends.

DANCE CLUBS

Drunken Monkey Annie's Social Club. 9pm, free.
Weekly guest DJs and Hamm's for a buck.**Eclectic Company** Skylark, 9pm, free. DJs Tones
and Jaybee spin old school hip hop, bass, dub,
glitch, and electro.**Share the Love** Trigger, 2344 Market, SF; (415)
551-CLUB. 5pm, free. With DJ Pam Hubuck spin-
ning house.**Womanizer** Bar on Church. 9pm. With DJ Nuxx.
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10/16: FLOATER • 11/04 & 11/11: PETE AND J
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Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants 2009 and Top 10 New Restaurants of 2008
—San Francisco Chronicle

<p>tonight! Wed, September 9 EVERYDAY PEOPLE featuring FRED ROSS</p> <p>tomorrow! Thurs, September 10 Open Dance Floor SILA & THE AFROFUNK EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Fri, Sat, Sun, September 11, 12, 13 this weekend! THE BAD PLUS</p> <p>this weekend! Sat, September 12 (11:59pm, Late Show) Beyond Jazz Music Series: Midnight Edition THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE featuring Nicolay & Phonte (of Little Brother)</p> <p>next week! Mon, September 14 BUCKWHEAT ZYDECO</p> <p>next week! Tues, September 15 HYIM <i>Sex In The Morning</i> - Record Release</p> <p>Wed, September 16 DR. LONNIE SMITH TRIO with Peter Bernstein and Bill Stewart with DJ Harry D</p> <p>Thurs, September 17 (8pm, Early Show) SAKAI</p> <p>Thurs, September 17 (10:30pm, Late Show) BERNIE WORRELL with BROUN FELLINIS</p> <p>Fri, Sat, September 18, 19 IDLE WARSHIP: TALIB KWELI, RES, GRAPH NOBEL with Live Band</p> <p>Sun, September 20 TONY LINDSAY BAND with special guest Chris Cain</p> <p>Mon, September 21 JOHN PATITUCCI TRIO with George Garzone & Marcus Gilmore</p> <p>Late Night Live! Every Tuesday 9:30pm - late, \$5 Cover</p>	<p>Wed, Thurs, September 9, 10 this week! BRIAN BROMBERG'S IT IS WHAT IT IS TOUR featuring Patrice Rushen, Will Kennedy Gary Meek</p> <p>Fri, Sat, Sun, September 11, 12, 13 Celebrating 30 Years! HIROSHIMA this weekend!</p> <p>Mon, September 14 next week! JOHN CALLOWAY & THE FLUTE ODYSSEY</p> <p>Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri September 15, 16, 17, 18 next week! CHICK COREA STANLEY CLARKE & LENNY WHITE</p> <p>Sat, Sun, September 19, 20 LIZZ WRIGHT</p> <p>Mon, September 21 ERIC MUHLER QUARTET <i>The Jury is Out</i> - CD Release</p> <p>Tues, Wed, September 22, 23 SOULIVE with The Shady Horns, Nigel Hall and special guest FRED WESLEY Also appearing at Yoshi's SF September 24-25</p> <p>Thurs, September 24 JOHN NEMETH</p> <p>Fri, Sat, Sun, September 25, 26, 27 STANLEY JORDAN</p> <p>Mon, September 28 BILL ORTIZ</p> <p>Tues, September 29 KBX Presents SAM BOSTIC with special guests Kimmie Taylor (KBX Morning Show) Donnie Williams & Adesha Johnson</p> <p>Wed, September 30 ALBINO!</p>
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9/12 Living with Ghosts, Park Lane, Proper Dose

9/18 Thread Spinners, All My Pretty Ones, Cosio

9/19 Ras Digital, Natty Congo, China Black

9/20 T-Roy & Fam, Another Tangent, Nerd Nate, Social Sunday, John Da Bomb, Rachett, Scramble Wavelengths, 5 Acres of Fear

9/23 Son, Left Coast Special, Aether, Nerd Nate, JamalFromIndiana, Menace Man, Aja, T-Roy

9/24 Midnight Sun

9/25 Dave & Confused, Funky Beulah, Ghosts on the Radio, Spacelord

9/26 Russian Solution, Modorass, Foreign Affair

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EVENTS



Architecture and the City

» PREVIEW I don't know whether this is awesome or boring, but one of the most perverse pleasures to be had in the Bay for the last decade has been fantasy house-hunting — dressing like you can afford more than a rent-controlled railroad flat's closet and hitting the Sunday open-house real estate orgy circuit, mostly to decry the recent penchant for tacky recessed lighting and cheap beige granite counter-tops. The '80s are back! If you're a premium architecture and design junkie, though, you'll be swooning all September — launching your intellectual and tactical fantasies into the clouds with the Architecture and the City festival, presented by AIA San Francisco. The sixth annual celebration of unique builds, the nation's largest, not only takes you on the San Francisco Living: Home Tours drool-a-thon (Sept. 12-13) focusing on smart sustainability, but also explores a bonanza of exciting, dialogue-stimulating Bay design ideas through presentations, investigations, demonstrations, and more. Prepare to push up your teeny octagon-shaped eyeglasses and scream, "Build it! Build it NOW!" (**Marke B.**)

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CITY Through September 30. Check Web site for

locations, times, and prices. www.aiasf.org/archandcity

Events listings are compiled by Paula Connelly. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

WEDNESDAY 9

Beatles Day Amoeba Music, 1855 Haight, SF; (415) 831-1200. 11am-8pm, free. Celebrate the release of the newly remastered Beatles CDs with Beatles DJ sets, fab four trivia and giveaways, a Beatles cover band, and a Beatles look-like contest.

THURSDAY 10

Red Vic Benefit Mercury Café, 201 Octavia, SF; (415) 252-7855. 7pm, \$10-30 sliding scale. Help out your favorite local rep house while having a good time at this benefit featuring live music by Tango No.9 and Toshio Hirano, silent auction with art and film-related items, and a raffle.
Supergirls Cartoon Art Museum, 655 Mission, SF; (415) CAR-TOON. 7pm, free. Hear Mike Madrid, author of *The Supergirls*, discuss the cultural history of the superheroine, like how their search for identity, battle for equality, and juggling the dual roles of career and motherhood mirrors real life. Wine tasting hosted by Small Vines Wines.

FRIDAY 11

Party for the People SubMission, 2183 Mission, SF; (415) 431-4210. 8:30pm, \$5-20 sliding scale. Enjoy live Latin music, DJs, raffles, fresh Mexican juices, and veggie tacos at this event where all proceeds will benefit PODER, a Mission/Excelsior District community organization where local youth lead environmental justice projects.

SATURDAY 12

IXFF Kick-off Party El Rio, 3158 Mission, SF;

(415) 282-3325. 9pm, \$7. Celebrate Good Vibrations' Fourth Annual Independent Erotic Film Festival with a special screening of Courtney Trouble's new film, *Speakeasy*, music with DJ Justin Credible, prizes, and more.
Power to the Peaceful Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, SF; www.powertothepeaceful.org. 9am-5pm; free, donations accepted. This music, arts, action, and yoga festival featuring performances by Michael Franti and Spearhead, Alanis Morissette, Sellassie, and more is dedicated to issues of social justice, non-violence, cultural co-existence, and environmental sustainability.

BAY AREA Crossword Puzzle Tournament Alameda High School Cafeteria, 2250 Central, Alameda; www.bayareacrosswords.org. 10:30am, \$30. Challenge yourself with some crossword competition at the second annual Bay Area Crossword Puzzle Tournament, featuring three unpublished New York Times puzzles donated by the legendary Will Shortz.

SUNDAY 13

BAY AREA Dash for a Cure Oakland Aviation Museum, 8252 Earhart Rd., Bldg 621, Oakland International Airport, Oak.; (510) 638-7100. 2pm, free. Experience, through video clips, photos and PowerPoint, the thrilling account of CarolAnn Garratt 's World Record breaking flight around the world to raise money and awareness for ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease.

MONDAY 14

Fixing U.S. Healthcare Commonwealth Club, 2nd floor, 595 Market, SF; (415) 597-6700. Noon, \$15. Hear T.R. Reid, correspondent for *the Washington Post*, commentator for *NPR*, and author of *The Healing of America*, weigh in on whether or not the U.S. can really fix healthcare and how we can learn from health-care models across the globe. **SFBG**

visual art

Amanda Kirkhuff's deep and rangy portraits of women have included looks at Dr. Laura Schlesinger, Monique, and now, Lorena Bobbitt (left).

Not so coincidentally, Kirkhuff's new show also includes a modern take on Judith slaying Holofernes. | LORENA BOBBITT AND JUDY WITH THE HEAD OF HOLOFERNES COURTESY OF AMANDA KIRKHUFF AND [2ND FLOOR PROJECTS]



Untamed

Amanda Kirkhuff creates portraits of wild women without boxing them in

By Johnny Ray Huston
johnny@sfbg.com

REVIEW Amanda Kirkhuff is drawn to wild women. In a 2007 show at [2nd Floor Projects], she used black and green ink to render some female icons whose strengths are laced with ambivalence. For example, in a portrait of Dr. Laura Schlesinger, the pissy, vindictive self-help guru is rendered-times-five in a manner that emphasizes the manic energy in her eyes. (Even Schlesinger's hair, "pains-takingly detailed" by Kirkhuff, Ava Jancar noted in a *Guardian* review, seems slightly feral.) Likewise, in close-up looks at Mo'Nique from the same exhibition, the comedian and actress seems ready to burst out of her skin with ferocity and hunger — a craving for hilarity? No doubt about it: large and in charge in a manner akin to but also very different from Mo'Nique, Kirkhuff's work has a tremendous, at times radical, sense of humor.

Two year later at the same space, Kirkhuff has turned her attention to another famous woman with a highly-charged

image: Lorena Bobbitt. In "here comes every body," a group exhibition at Margaret Tedesco's space, Kirkhuff's looks at the woman known for cutting off her drunken louse of a husband's penis after a rape. Her visions are funny in a shiver-inducing, exciting way. They're also revelatory in terms of psychological twists, and in one case, depth.

Kirkhuff's oil on canvas portrait *Lorena Bobbitt* pulls the viewer past its gaudy and ostentatious gold frame into an eye-to-eye encounter. To try to describe the wildness — the mix of woundedness, defiance, and spark of ideas and action — in her eyes is a doomed venture. (A self-portrait by Kirkhuff in a recent show at Ratio 3 S-M porn-themed "Safe Word" had a similar boldness.) Her hair is lush and dark, and the paintings' colors are rich, an on-the-brink mix between old master classicism and lurid pulp. The overall piece is a great work, one of the best paintings to emerge from the Bay Area in years, and even more exciting when thought of amongst a new wave of California

paintings by artists such as Neil LeDoux and — in some ways Kirkhuff's masculine homo counterpart — Conrad Ruiz.

One kicker of Kirkhuff's latest [2nd Floor Projects] appearance comes in the form of another Bobbitt piece. Placed kiddie corner from the oil painting, a large diptych drawing depicts Bobbitt cradling something bloody in some cloths. Here, she seems to have regressed into a childish state, and her actions take on a quality of both obedient housework and rebellious secretiveness. There's an electricity, a thrilling charge to the dynamic between the two works, and how they are arranged in relation to one another. Slightly less compelling, but arresting nonetheless, is *Judy with the Head of Holofernes*, a cranium-severer's nod to classicism that's a stark cousin of local artist Jamie Vasta's glitter explorations of the same subject.

Kirkhuff is that rare young artist who combines technical facility with actual content that isn't just art school wankery. More impressively, her still small (in terms of number) body of work to date

has a definite arc. She is tapping into pop cultural femininity in a manner that has grown past the rigid binaries or blindness regarding self-critique that some might associate with pop culture feminism. She's after something more truthful and primal, and her talent allows her to reach it and capture it and yet leave it enigmatic. There's some untamed ambivalence at play in her imagery, except she and the women she sees aren't playing, at all. The fact that a self-portrait is at the center of the second of the three main shows she's taken part in hints that she's only just begun, so to speak.

One last thing: I like it that Kirkhuff thanks "all the queers" in her notes for the show. Gotta keep the faith amid crossover and cultural vampirism. She makes it easy to do. **SFBG**

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stage

Dancer Ildiko Polony makes a splash
in Courage Group's *dirty girl*.

PHOTO BY LOUIS PÉPIN



Ballet without borders

Courage Group premieres a mixed bag of new works

By Rita Felciano
a&celetters@sfbg.com

REVIEW For its first appearance — with three new works — at the Jewish Community Center Sept. 3-4, the Courage Group attracted a large, appreciative audience. It's easy to see why. Over his company's seven years of existence, Todd Courage has developed a choreographic language that is ballet-based but thoroughly contemporary in the way it tears — sometimes humorously, sometimes sarcastically — at ballet's edges. He loves its linearity, so he chooses from existing steps and combinations and then stirs them into a melting pot, where they become just one of the ingredients at his disposal.

Musically, he is equally selective. He patches his scores together like a quilter. You quickly learn to forget about context and go along for the ride. Some of the musical transitions may jar, but most of the time they develop something akin to an aural logic. I found myself amused by Bach and Handel playing hopscotch with each other. Chris Fletcher was the program's excellent sound engineer.

Courage may be more of a mix-master of dance than an innovator, but he has developed his own voice and the skills to articulate his intentions. This trio of works, at the very least, indicates that he knows where he wants to go. And he is in a hurry to get there. All three are foaming

with ideas; they also tend to wander. Tighter control, not necessarily of individual sections but of the overall trajectory, is an issue.

Placing *six shallow women and a deep one* at the top of the program, with tall Peta Barrett as the odd one out, was a risky choice. The dancers looked awful in the way they stomped through their steps, apparently indifferent to the opening phrases of Bach's glorious "Violin Concerto in D minor." Then the possibility arose that Courage has perhaps seen too many students tear mindlessly through ballet class. This may have inspired him to start out with a deadpan version of every teacher's terminal frustration.

In the second movement, when Barrett calmly unfolded her limbs, the audience could breathe a sigh of relief. Her partnering of the company's smallest dancer, Christina Chelette — including cantilevering leg hugs — suggested an emotional relationship between equals despite physical differences. The rest of *six* alternated between Bach and Handel in choreography in which the dancers did just fine. They might momentarily have sunk into a ballet pose, but some of the most effective sections, such as canonic entrances of purposeful walks, were beautifully simple. Courage also recognized one of dance's great secrets: the beauty of unisons.

dirty girl dug into one of the choreographer's previous preoccupations — the awkwardness of pubescence. In

2006's *High Anita*, it was cheerleaders. Here the cheerleaders went to a slumber party and gave the heroine a sponge bath. *girl's* humor is somewhat creepy as these young women veered between innocence and sex kittens. The choreography was game-based and influenced by teen fashion imagery. Dressed in the tiniest of skirts with flaming ruched red underwear, the dancers negotiated their way between the strictures of the Voice of God (Barrett) and the demands of their budding sexuality. The former yielded a spanking, the latter offered birthday cake frosting to lick. You can read into those images anything you want. The audience, probably remembering their own in-between years, clearly appreciated Courage's lighthearted approach. I thought it just a tad too silly.

The quite substantial *but you can't hide* introduced the evening's lone male dancers, Nol Simonse and Brendan Barthel. First seen in languid duets, they eventually folded themselves into the women's ensemble. Simonse, sinewy and liquid, was a joy to behold. This was Courage at his best: mirror images for the men, a violent female duet, whispering voices and moonwalks, full body contact, and a finger to a chin. *can't hide* is too episodic and packs in too much material, but John Adams' splendid "The Chairman Dances" kept them going all the way into the dark. **SFBG**

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San Francisco Fringe Festival

» **PREVIEW** There is literally something for everyone at this year’s 18th annual San Francisco Fringe Festival. Don’t try to argue, man — this year’s slate, which jams over 250 performances of over 40 experimental works by companies near and far into just under two weeks, is incredibly diverse. And though the old judging-a-book-by-its-cover cliché definitely applies to theater, some of the titles here are pretty irresistible: *Hell, the Musical* (inhabitants include a Valencia Street dyke and a Marina ditz); *Spider Baby the musical* (based on the 1968 movie subtitled *The Maddest Story Ever Told?* Yes, please!); and the Ed Gein-inspired *The Texas Chainsaw Musical* (sense a theme here?). For fans of history and, uh, sketch comedy, there’s the Revolutionary War-themed *Ticonderoga*; for morally-conflicted mountain climbers, there’s *The Tao of Everest*; and for anyone who thinks plays are boring, there are several on tap that challenge that belief in the most scandalously delightful ways, including Bible-stories-on-crack *Pulp Scripture* and the site-specific *Missing: fugue #9: wear a warm coat*, performed as audiences stroll through Bayview’s Quesada Gardens. **(Cheryl Eddy)**

SAN FRANCISCO FRINGE FESTIVAL Sept 9–20, \$10 or less. Various venues (main venue is Exit Theater, 156 Eddy, SF). (415) 673-3847, www.sffringe.org

Stage listings are compiled by Molly Freedenberg. Performance times may change; call venues to confirm. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Rita Felciano, and Nicole Gluckstern. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks. For the complete listings, go to www.sfbg.com.

THEATER

OPENING

Brief Encounter American Conservatory Theatre, 415 Geary; 749-2228, www.act-sf.org. \$14-82. Previews Fri/11-Sat/12 and Tues/15, 8pm (also Sat/12, 2pm); Sun/13, 7pm. Opens Sept 16, 8pm. Runs Tues-Sat, 8pm (also Sat-Sun, 2pm; check website for additional showtimes). Through Oct 4. ACT presents British company Kneehigh Theatre’s production of Emma Rice’s adaptation of Noël Coward’s words and music. **Il Trovatore** War Memorial Opera House, 301 Van Ness; 864-3330, www.sfopera.com. \$15-310. Opens Fri/11, 7pm. Performance times vary, through Oct 6. San Francisco Opera opens their 87th season with the Verdi classic; new music director Nicola Luisotti conducts. **Romeo and Julien** Boxcar Theatre, 505 Natoma; 1-800-838-3006, www.boxcartheatre.org. \$20-30. Previews Thurs/10-Sat/11, 8pm; Sun/13, 5pm. Opens Mon/14, 8pm. Runs Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through Oct 3. Boxcar Theatre performs a transgender version of Shakespeare’s classic tragedy. **“The Second Attack of the Killer B-Movies”** Stage Werx, 533 Sutter; <http://stagewerx.org>, <http://foulplaysf.com>. \$25. Opens Thurs/10, 8pm. Runs Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through Nov 7. Foul Play brings classic B movies to the stage: *Blue Velvet* (Sept 10-22), *The Bride of Frankenstein* (Oct 2-17), and *Barbarella* (Oct 22-Nov 7). **“San Francisco Fringe Festival”** Various venues (main venue is Exit Theater, 156 Eddy); 673-3847, www.sffringe.org. \$10 or less. Sept 9-20, various times. The 18th annual festival of local, national, and international experimental theater boasts over 250 performances in 12 days.

You Can’t Get There From Here Theater Artaud, 450 Florida; 1-800-838-3006, www.zspace.org. \$20. Opens Thurs/10, 7pm. Runs Thurs, 8pm; Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm. Through Sept 27. Anne Galjour performs her solo show about class and cultural divides in contemporary America.

BAY AREA

My Name is Asher Lev Marin Theatre Company, 397 Miller, Mill Valley; (415) 388-5208, www.marintheatre.org. \$31-51. Previews Thurs/10-Sat/12, 8pm; Sun/13, 7pm. Opens Tues/15, 8pm. Runs Tues, Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Wed, 7:30pm; Sun, 7pm (check website for additional showtimes). Through Oct 4. Marin Theatre Company performs Aaron Posner’s adaptation of the Chaim Potok novel. **This World in a Woman’s Hands** Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby, Berk; (510) 841-6500, www.shotgunplayers.org. \$15-30. Previews Thurs/10, 8pm. Opens Fri/11, 8pm. Runs Thurs-Sat, 8pm (also Wed, 8pm starting Sept 23); Sun, 5pm. Through Oct 18. Shotgun Players perform Marcus Gardley’s tale of an African American women working working on WWII Victory warships in Richmond’s Henry Kaiser Shipyards.

ONGOING

“AfroSolo Arts Festival” Various venues; 771-2376, www.afrosolo.org. Prices vary. Various dates through Oct 15. AfroSolo Theatre Company presents the 16th annual festival celebrating artists giving voice to the black experience, featuring music, visual arts, and more. **The Comedy of Errors** Presidio Main Post Parade Ground Lawn, Graham between Lincoln and Moraga; 558-0888, www.sfsakes.org. Free. Sat, 7:30pm; Sun, 2:30pm. Through Sept 20. The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival presents the classic directed by Kenneth Kelleher. **A Crass Act** New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness; 861-8972, www.nctcsf.org. \$20-\$25. Thurs/9-Sat/12, 8pm. NCTC’s Summer Cabaret Series presents Tom Orr in an all-new musical comedy.

» **East 14th** Marsh, 1062 Valencia; 1-800-838-3006, www.themarsh.org. \$20-35. Fri, 8pm; Sat, 8:30pm; Sun, 3pm. Through Oct. 10.

Don Reed’s solo play, making its local premiere at the Marsh after an acclaimed New York run, is truly a welcome homecoming twice over. It returns the Bay Area native to the place of his vibrant, physically dynamic, consistently hilarious coming-of-age story, set in 1970s Oakland between two poles of East 14th Street’s African American neighborhood: one defined by his mother’s strict ass-whooping home, dominated by his uptight Jehovah’s Witness stepfather; the other by his biological father’s madcap but utterly non-judgmental party house. The latter—shared by two stepbrothers, one a player and the other flamboyantly gay, under a pimped-out, bighearted patriarch whose only rule is “be yourself”—becomes the teen-age Reed’s refuge from a boyhood bereft of Christmas and filled with weekend door-to-door proselytizing. Still, much about the facts of life in the ghetto initially eludes the hormonal and naïve young Reed, including his own flamboyant, ever-flush father’s occupation: “I just thought he was really into hats.” But dad—along with each of the characters Reed deftly incarnates in this very engaging, loving but never hokey tribute—has something to teach the talented kid whose excellence in speech and writing at school marked him out, correctly, as a future “somebody.” (Avila)

Eccentrics of San Francisco’s Barbary Coast: A Magical Escapade San Francisco Magic Parlor, Chancellor Hotel Union Square, 433 Powell; 1-800-838-3006. \$30. Fri-Sat, 8pm. Ongoing. This show celebrates real-life characters from San Francisco’s colorful and notorious past.

Good Boys and True New Conservatory Theatre Center, 25 Van Ness, SF, 861-4914, www.nctcsf.org. Wed-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2pm. Through Sept 20. NCTC presents the West Coast premiere of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa’s drama.

The Grapes of Wrath Actors Theatre of SF, 855 Bush; 345-1287, www.actorstheatresf.org. \$10-\$35. Wed-Sat, 8pm. Through Sept 26. Actors Theatre of San Francisco Presents Frank Galati’s adaptation of John Steinbeck’s novel.

KML Patronizes the Arts Traveling Jewish Theatre, 470 Florida; 558-7721, killingmylobster.com. \$15-\$20. Thurs/10-Fri/11, 8pm; Sat/12-Sun/13, 7pm (also Sat/12, 10pm). Killing My Lobster returns with an original sketch comedy production directed by Erin Carter.

Not a Genuine Black Man Off Market Theaters, Studio250 stage, 965 Mission; (800) 838-3006, www.briancopeland.com. \$25. Fri, 8pm; Sat, 5pm. Through Oct 17. Off Market Theaters presents Brian Copeland’s solo show about a little-known chapter of Bay Area history.

El Otro Thick House, 1695 18th St; 401-8081, www.thickhouse.org. \$15-\$30. Thurs/10-Sun/13, 8pm. Thick Description revives their 1998 hit.

Pearls Over Shanghai Hypnodrome, 575 Tenth St.; 1-800-838-3006, www.thrillpeddlers.com. \$30-69. Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 7pm. Through Sept 20. Thrillpeddlers presents this revival of the legendary Cockettes’ 1970 musical extravaganza.

Shanghai San Francisco One Telegraph Hill; 1-877-384-7843, www.shanghaisanfrancisco.com. \$40. Sat, 1pm. Ongoing. To be Shanghai’d: “to be kidnapped for compulsory service aboard a ship...to be induced or compelled to do something, especially by fraud or force”. Once the scene of many an “involuntary” job interview, San Francisco’s Barbary Coast is now the staging ground for *Shanghai San Francisco*, a performance piece slash improv slash scavenger hunt through the still-beating hearts of North Beach and Chinatown, to the edge of the Tenderloin. Beginning at the base of Coit Tower, participants meet the first of several characters who set up the action and dispense clues, before sending the audience off on a self-paced jaunt through the aforementioned neighborhoods, induced and compelled (though not by force) to search for a kidnapped member of the revived San Francisco Committee of Vigilance. It’s a fine notion and a fun stroll on a sunny afternoon, but ultimately succeeds far better as a walking tour than as theatre. Because the actors are spread rather thinly on the ground, they’re unable to take better advantage of their superior vantage by stalking groups a little more closely, staging distractions along the way, and generally engaging the audience as such a little more frequently. But since *Shanghai San Francisco* is a constantly evolving project, maybe next time they’ll do just that. (Gluckstern)

DANCE

“Fiesta Flamenca” Bollyhood Café, 3372 19th St; www.bollyhoodcafe.com. Wed, 8pm. \$15. Cuadro Aljibe and guests perform in a casual cantina setting. **SFBG**

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food + drink

Does it get any better than crawfish, shrimp, sausage, and corn served in a bag? At Red Crawfish in the Tenderloin it does.

GUARDIAN PHOTO BY RORY McNAMARA



The red and the green

By Paul Reidinger
paulr@sfbg.com

The color of cooked crawfish isn't red, exactly — more a garnet. If it were a wine, it would be a medium-bodied pinot noir. Certainly it would never be mistaken for cooked lobster, which (*pace* Red Lobster) isn't red at all, but more of an inflamed orange. You see plenty of crawfish being rushed from the evening kitchen at Red Crawfish in the Tenderloin; the crustaceans make the journey in shallow white bowls and reach tables full of eager patrons who've fitted themselves out with plastic bibs in anticipation of mess.

Red Crawfish, like the Green Hornet, has something of a dual identity. By day it's a quasi pan-Asian place tending toward Chinese and Vietnamese favorites. But as the sun sets, it dons a Cajun guise, and a menu filled with familiars like five-spice chicken and beef noodle soup suddenly develops a bayou section that includes (besides crawfish) treats such as gumbo and Cajun fries.

The dual-identity restaurant is a rare phenomenon, but not an unknown one. Some years ago there was a spot on lower Haight Street that appeared to be an all-American café by day but turned into a Senegalese joint on certain nights of the week. And, in the present moment, we have Coffee Bar,

which daytimers know as a coffee bar but becomes host to Radio Africa Kitchen several nights a week. Red Crawfish is close kin to these spots, but it has the additional charm of joining compatible, if unlikely, cuisines without fusing them. The Cajun dishes remain Cajun and the Asian dishes Asian, but they do make a nice harmony: a communion of spiciness.

The cathedral in which this union takes place is unprepossessing, in true Tenderloin fashion. The dining room is deep and very narrow — a half-storefront — with a long mirror along one wall to give the illusion of greater spaciousness. Ceiling fans do offer a hint of New Orleans. But the furniture, though plain, is well-made, the tabletops are clean, and you are greeted and seated promptly when you step through the door.

The Cajun dishes are dialed up according to the patron's preferred level of heat (on a four-step scale) and style of seasoning. For the seafood combo (\$13.99), for instance, you choose among lemon-pepper, garlic butter, and red crawfish flavor palettes. The last turned out to be a deep red, slightly oily, iridescent soup flecked with dried chili and giving a faint charge of fruity acidity; had it been spiked with a mild vinegar? In this shallow pond frolicked shrimp (partly shucked), oysters (fully shucked), and chunks of calamari and white fish. The second-lowest level of

heat ("spicy") proved to be more than sufficient, while the pre-shucking, while probably indicative of slack-erdom on our part, also made the dish much easier to eat and enjoy and at the same time limited the mess. That's a lot of upside.

Cajun fries (\$3.99 for a semi-gigantic plate) were fine but ordinary. We did detect a faint dusting of cayenne pepper on them, but not enough to make a serious impression. Better, for flavored-up starch, were the garlic noodles (\$6.50). They would have gone brilliantly with the gumbo (\$10.99), but the gumbo was somewhat late in arriving. In fact, it arrived last and, like a folk act following a death-metal group, its luster was at first somewhat dimmed by the potency of the seafood combo that preceded it.

But the gumbo found traction after a bite or two and was thick and satisfying even without rice — or garlic noodles. The thickener was okra, whose flavor has a ghostly bite, and the result wasn't particularly pretty: a bowlful of lumpy gray-green sludge. The lumps, though, consisted of delectables such as shrimp, chicken, and pork, and added enough heft to make the gumbo into a (potential) meal in itself.

An unexpected rival for meal-in-itself (although not heart-healthy) honors might be the beignets (\$4.50), a quartet of deep-fried pastries

shaped like little top hats and served with a pair of massive ice-cream torpedoes. The ice cream was vanilla, and the torpedoes were cross-hatched with chocolate sauce, and that alone would have been enough for two people — even two hungry, greedy people bewitched by the crunchy fat-tiness of the beignets. (To describe these as "deep-fried" does not quite capture the reality.)

In sunshine — or fogshine, as the case may be — the restaurant slips into east Asian character. Salt and pepper calamari (\$5.50) are battered and presented with a nuoc nam-based dipping sauce whose sharpness helps cut the grease. Mixed vegetables with tofu (\$5.95) sets a low mountain of broccoli florets, carrots, cabbage, and tofu cubes on a huge pediment of white rice. The vegetables are crisp and fresh; the soy-heavy brown sauce, a little bland. Five-spice chicken (\$7.50), on the other hand, with egg rolls and vermicelli, is enhanced with mint, which brings both color and sweet breath to the rescue. That color is green, by the way. **SFBG**

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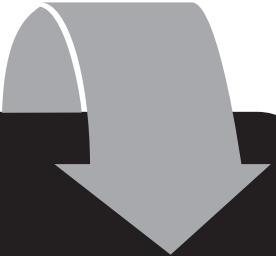
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dered, and bejuiced, I dream that I start an already started car, and instead of the grind of everyday catastrophe

I get another level of startedness. An overdrive. An engine firing on more cylinders than it even has. This bodes well. For the first time in over three weeks, I wake up without a headache.

Still, I keep my appointment with my doctor. How could I not? I've been waiting to see her for 23 painful days. God bless Kaiser Permanente, it's the best I can do!

And I love my doctor. Ever since she recommended duct tape for my warts (which worked), she has held a special spot in my heart. Speaking of which, there's something else I want to talk to her about: my heart. Not in the ticker sense, but the other one. I'm in love, madly, and it is weirdly reciprocal and, even weirder ... well, my girlfriend is a girl, this time.

Sorry for the deception. It was necessary, on account of complications.

True, her name is Romeo, and she's boyishly beautiful and sooo oh oh oh, but the fact is the plumbing is female, and when we are together, which is becoming increasingly possible, sex is complex and constant, and the question of pregnancy does come into play.

Now:

Until now, I have only had sex with men since becoming a woman, so it didn't matter. When I first started on hormones, my endocrinologist told me I would be irreversibly sterile within six months. It's been four years. On the other hand, I come from a family of 11 with a history of post-vasectomy procreation, virgin births, etc.

So in addition to heads and hearts, we chatted — my primary care doctor and me — about genitals and such, and in the end she ordered me some labwork: the usual blood stuff, plus a semen analysis.

This is going to be fun, I thought.

Then, for good measure, she threw in an MRI. My eyes got wide.

"Well, every time you mention your headache you point to the same exact spot," she explained.

"An MRI would not only rule

out a tumor, but also a leaking blood vessel, which could lead to an aneurism."

For the next three days I was in what would best be described as "a state." The headache was back, full force, and I needed constant acupuncture and/or massage therapy just to stop crying, let alone breathe. You know how it is ... when you meet the love of your life, then die.

So as soon as the results of the MRI came back clean and I got over my initial euphoria, I started thinking about semen. I'd watched my doctor put the order into her computer, but when I went to the Kaiser lab with my little empty cup and a plan, the order wasn't in the system. And the mean-ass bitch of a receptionist, whose name I would publish here if I could remember it, wouldn't even call my doctor and ask. She wrote down a number for me to call.

Which turned out to be the advice nurse. Who eventually was able to leave a message with my doctor. So for the next couple hours I had to keep getting in line to see the meanie again, until finally the order was in, but it wasn't for semen. It was something else.

So I had to call another advice nurse, and explain the situation again, and in case you didn't know, it's hard to be a woman with a semen sample, or trying to get one. Every person I talked to started out addressing me as ma'am, and ended up calling me sir. And the receptionist seemed to be enjoying making me talk to as many people as possible. I hate Kaiser. I hate my country.

I love my Romeo. After I gave up and was driving down to Berkeley, to work, she/he called again, from Germany. The other thing about being a woman with a semen sample is that it ain't easy to come by. Pun intended. Testosterone, in my experience, does it any time, any place. Estrogen ... unh-unh. Plan was to find a cozy bathroom stall, or broom closet, and have phone sex with Romeo, who had been looking forward to this all day. And calling me every 15 minutes.

"Not now," KP'd made me say again and again, to my love, to my life, who I crave like air. "I have a headache."

Later that day, while the kids were napping, Kaiser finally got it all sorted out. I got a call from the urology department, wanting to schedule me for a vasectomy.

I said, "um" ... **SFBG**

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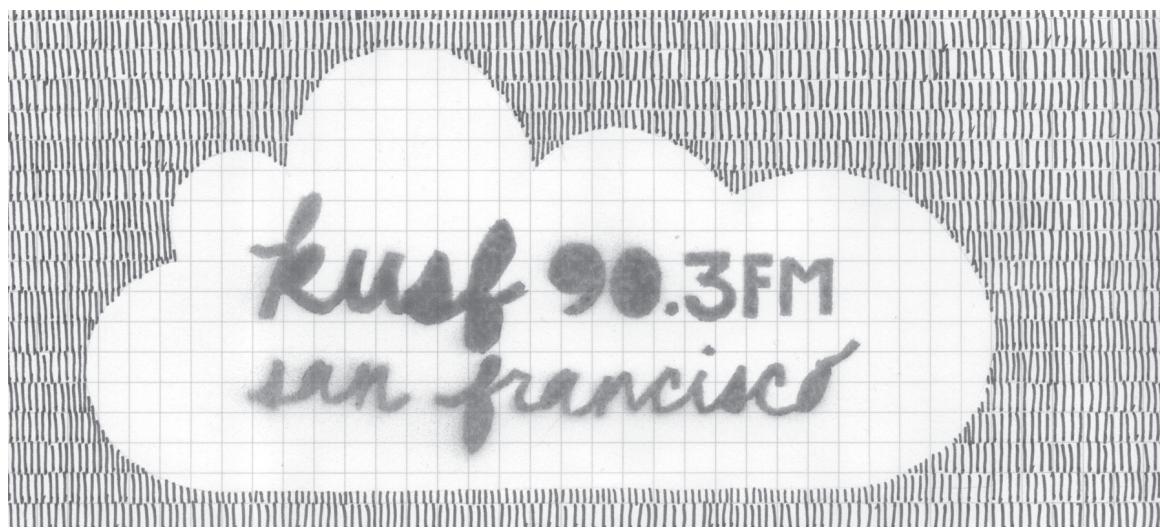


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film

Standouts in the Good Vibrations Independent Erotic Film Festival include (clockwise from far left) *Neurotique No. 4*, *Let Me Tell You*, and *In Their Room*. At right, sisters Lauren (Maggie Hatcher) and Jeannie (Tilly Hatcher) bond in *Beeswax*.

BEESWAX PHOTO BY MATTHIAS GRUNSKY, COURTESY OF THE CINEMA GUILD



Lights, camera, kink!

Good Vibrations' film fest spreads reel love

By Louis Peitzman
a&eletters@sfbg.com

For most of us, erotic film is more a means to an end than an event unto itself — not to mention something to be enjoyed in private. This month, Good Vibrations offers a prime opportunity to break free from that conception and celebrate erotica in a thoroughly public way. On Sept. 17, the Good Vibrations Independent Erotic Film Festival returns to the Castro Theatre: two hosts, 11 finalists, and countless displays of kink, fetish, and good old-fashioned perversion.

According to festival director Camilla Lombard, Good Vibes received 50 submissions from all over the world. What was once regional has become international, and the formerly one-night event is being spread out across an entire week. Starting Sept. 12, Good Vibes is hosting a series of events, including a “Blue Movie Night” and a screening of the classic *The Devil in Miss Jones* (1973) — with Miss Jones herself, Georgina Spelvin, in attendance.

The climax (no pun intended)

is the Sept. 17 Castro Theatre screening, hosted by Peaches Christ and Dr. Carol Queen. Audience members will vote on the short films, which range from softcore to hardcore, sexy to sexier. The linking characteristic of these pieces is their objectivity — it's not about what the mainstream porn industry says is hot. It's up to the filmmakers and, naturally, their audience to decide.

Travis Mathews' *In Their Room* finds its eroticism in the reality of male sexuality rather than in the act itself. Mathews interviewed a group of *BUTT* magazine readers in their bedrooms, getting his subjects to uncover themselves — literally and figuratively.

“I think we're so desensitized in the traditional realm of what's erotic and what's pornographic that it just becomes not sexy,” he explains. “The things that are interesting to me in porn are the little glimpses of things that are real or are authentic or mess-ups.”

Though more explicit, *Let Me Tell You* by Paul Festa is equally unconventional. His piece was edited down from his audition tape for

John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus* (2006). A “remix” of the original, Festa's short fits with the festival's theme of subjective appreciation. As he puts it, “When you remove what you thought was the heart of it, it actually gives the reader or viewer something to do.”

And then there are films with no nudity at all, like Nara Denning's *Neurotique No. 4*, a strange silent movie that hints at the erotic but remains essentially chaste. Denning shares a sentiment similar to Festa's: “I left it kind of open for [the audience] to interpret.”

Unless you're an open-minded pansexual hornball, there's a good chance you won't find all 11 films arousing, and there's nothing wrong with that. Good Vibes intends their fest to be about choice and diversity, not about getting off — though standing O's (pun fully intended) are not discouraged, of course. **SFBG**

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MIND YOUR OWN: INDIE IDOL ANDREW BUJALSKI'S *BEESWAX* IS A LO-FI STANDOUT

There's no filmmaker working today who more accurately captures awkward moments than Andrew Bujalski. *Funny Ha Ha* (2002), *Mutual Appreciation* (2005), and his new *Beeswax* unfold like fly-on-the-wall documentaries (though they're all scripted by Bujalski), following ordinary folks doing everyday things: toiling at temp jobs, crushing on a friend's significant other, bullshitting around the kitchen table, and generally trying to negotiate the dramas of life that are both small and life-changing.

In 2005, Bujalski told me that he bristles every time he hears his films called “Cassavetes-esque.” I suspect he's also weary of the term “mumblecore,” though he's used it in interviews (and, according to Wikipedia, it was coined by a sound editor who'd worked with Bujalski.) But his films are at the forefront of the genre (see also: *Humpday*, 2005's *The Puffy Chair*), and they've consistently defined its characteristics, with amateur actors shot using bare-bones techniques in naturalistic settings. *Funny Ha Ha*, about a recent college grad trying to figure out what to do with her life, stayed in theaters for years, popping up in San Francisco more than once. *Mutual Appreciation*, a black-and-white look at a Brooklyn musician trying, uh, to figure out what to do with his life, opened locally but overall had less exposure.

Beeswax will surely lure Bujalski fans, but even those who think they hate mumblecore won't be disappointed by this tale. It's his best and most mature work to date, focusing on Austin, Texas twins Jeannie (Tilly Hatcher) and Lauren (Maggie Hatcher). Bujalski's in his 30s now, and his characters — while still facing uncertain futures — have slightly more adult concerns. Vintage shop co-owner Jeannie (whose use of a wheelchair is presented matter-of-factly) worries that her aloof business partner is plotting a power grab, a conflict that unfolds alongside mini-crises, like cash register tape jamming or an employee having an emotional meltdown.

Seeking legal advice, she reignites her relationship with Merrill (Alex Karpovsky, playing the Bujalski role since the director doesn't act in this one), who's charming though prone to making accidentally rude remarks. Meanwhile, Lauren's inability to find steady employment leads her to consider taking a spur-of-the-moment teaching job — in Kenya. As they fumble toward decisions emotional and practical, *Beeswax* simply steps back and observes. And as with all of Bujalski's films, it's hard not to get drawn in. **(Cheryl Eddy)**

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FILM



Alexis Tioseco, 1981-2009 and Nika Bohinc, 1979-2009: "The first impulse of any good film critic, and to this I think you would agree, must be of love," Tioseco (left) wrote to Bohinc in his 2008 essay "The Letter I Would Love to Read to You In Person." | PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN YAMMING

A time to love

Alexis Tioseco, Nika Bohinc, and the international film community

By Jason Sanders
 a&eletters@sfbg.com

The international independent film community may be sprawling in size — separated by continents, countries, and language — but it's united by a love for film, and a desire to share that passion. That's why, during a predawn night in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, a late evening in Slovenia and Europe, and an early afternoon in the United States and Canada, hundreds of people found themselves in shock after learning of the senseless deaths of film critics Alexis Tioseco and Nika Bohinc, killed Sept. 1 as their home was robbed in Quezon City, Manila.

To speak of Tioseco, a Filipino raised in Canada who returned to Manila, and Bohinc, a Slovenian based in Ljubljana until recently, is to speak of film, cinephilia, and love; it is also to speak of how we can create deep bonds with people scattered across the globe whom we see only once or twice a year, if that, but to whom we still feel united due to a common cause. Though I was in yet another part of the world, I was fortunate to have known and counted as Alexis and Nika as friends, even though I had only seen them at festivals here and there and in their Quezon City home.

Judging from a fledgling memorial on Facebook, others feel just as connected to the two. That's partly because of the closeness of the film community, and partly because of the effect they had on people.

Having returned "home" to Manila to assist with the family business, Alexis (ever the good son) found himself running it after his father passed away. His true passion, though, was cinema. It was Lav Diaz's *Batang, West Side* (2001) that changed his outlook on film, and a 12-page interview with Diaz that changed his future. After that the early 20-something kid with the bright eyes and brighter mind dedicated himself (or as much of himself as he could spare, after the family business) to film, and specifically Filipino film.

"While I love cinema in general, a passion that has grown exponentially over the years, I feel no need to put myself in service of that which doesn't need it [Hollywood]," he wrote in a moving article in *Rogue* magazine. "Philippine cinema has given much to me, and one must pay back one's debts." He became a film professor and film critic, and was the driving force behind arguably the most influential, intelligent blog on Southeast Asian cinema, www.criticine.com. In 2006 (at 25!), he was named by *The Philippine*

Star as "one of the most important young people in the country today" for his efforts to promote his nation's cinema.

Born and raised in Slovenia (about as far from the Philippines as one can get), Nika was also one of those amazing young protégés who makes the rest of us feel guilty for pissing away our youth. In her 20s she edited *Ekran*, a major film magazine, and helped organized the Isola Cinema Film Festival, both regarded as among the most intellectually challenging magazines and festivals in Europe. A huge admirer and promoter of American (and Californian) experimental filmmakers like James Benning, Bruce Conner, and Lewis Klahr, she was also active in the Ljubljana Film Festival and IndieLisboa, and had begun promoting Slovenian films to other festivals.

In 2007 the two met at the Rotterdam Film Festival. Both had been able, fortunately, to overcome the vast difficulties facing writers from "smaller" nations when it comes to attending festivals. There will be Americans, Brits, Western Europeans galore, Japanese, Canadians, and Koreans all over, but unfortunately very few representatives from anywhere else. Both Alexis and Nika were able to finagle funds, festival invitations, and jury memberships to help their travels. "I never expected to have the opportunity to travel for/from film, especially not on the expenses of others, but slowly the opportunities presented themselves," Alexis wrote. "Traveling is a privilege, and not one that I take lightly."

CONTINUES ON PAGE 50 »

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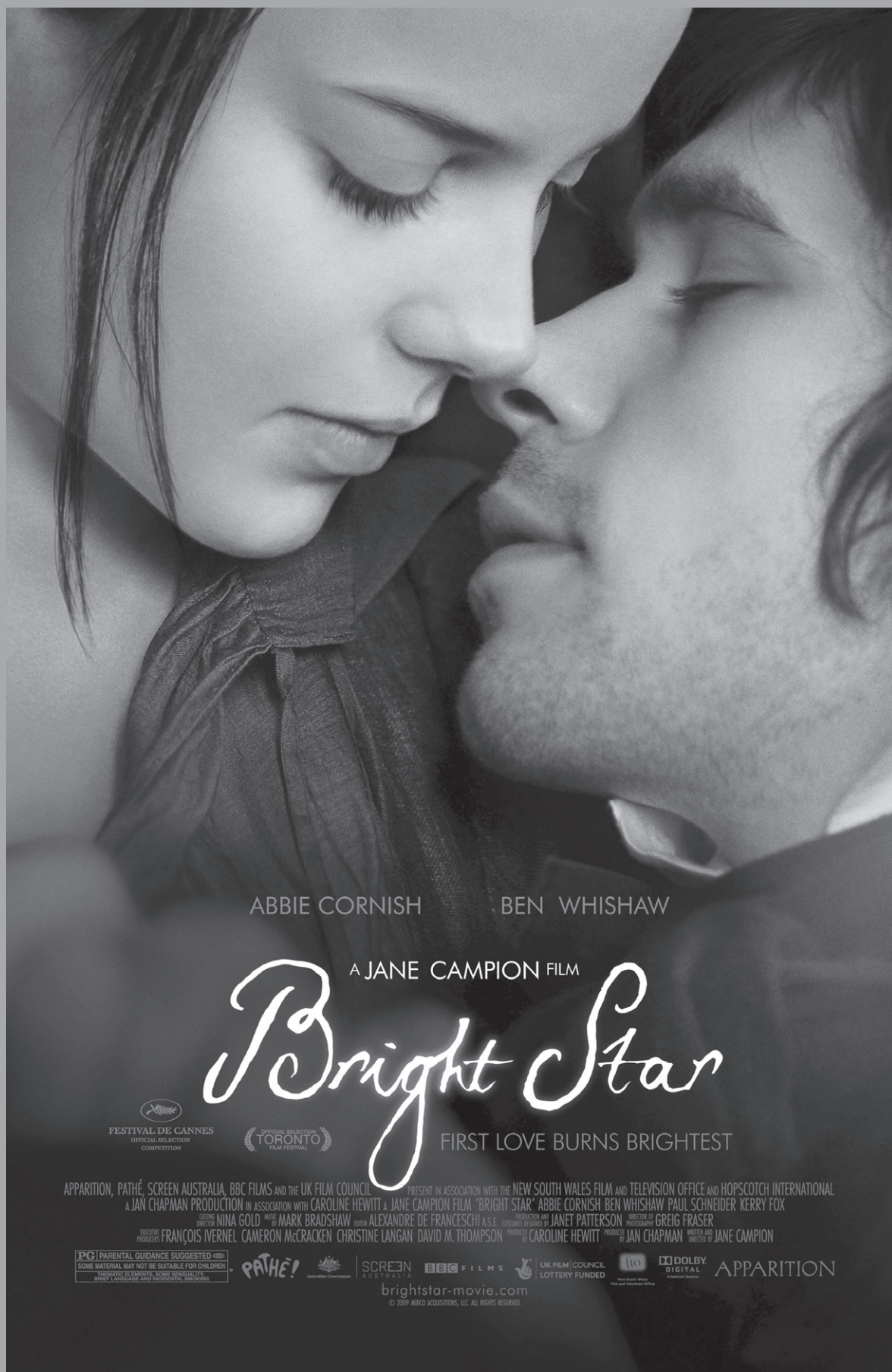
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Time to love CONT.

I also met them for the first time at Rotterdam. I was there when they met, introduced by our mutual friend, John Torres. I remember bonding with Alexis and Nika immediately. The festival environment, while filled with fellow travelers, is also intimidating, alienating, and totally full of shit, so individuals as grounded, personable, and truthful as the both of them stand out. Both inspired ease and good humor, easy laughter, and most of all talk, not of film or “cinema,” but of ourselves, our lives and loves and utter disasters, and, of course, idle gossip about everyone else.

A few days later Alexis told me of a crush he had on someone there. “That tall blonde Slovenian?” I asked immediately. I knew the answer before he confirmed. We all did.

From there the two split their lives across the world, wherever

brought them bootlegs of Nicholas Ray, Aki Kaurismaki, and Milos Forman; he gave me Ismael Bernal, Raymond Red, and, like any proud Filipino film buff, took us to a source of true pride: Manila’s vast pirated-DVD malls.

During one calm moment, Nika, still adjusting to the growing pains of beginning to live with a lover (much less relocating halfway around the world), asked my wife, “How did you know that he was the one for you?”

“I just knew, almost immediately,” my wife replied. “You will, too.”

My wife and I won’t associate their Quezon City home with the tragedy that befell them. Instead, we’ll remember Nika looking up from Alexis’s bed, across a pile of bootleg DVDs, with a 35mm print of *Batang West Side* on the floor and copies of Ekran on the chair, and quietly saying, “You’re right. I think I knew, too.”

“The first impulse of any good film critic, and to this I think you would agree, must be of love,” Alexis wrote to Nika a year later in *Rogue*. For all of us lucky to be a part of the film community, this love — for film, and for the friends we have made along the way who share it — is what unites us. It’s also what keeps our friendships going, even when we haven’t reached out to one another in months or years. And it’s what will keep people like Alexis and Nika in our hearts for a long, long time. Their true home still exists, in the words they wrote, the friendships they made, and the love they shared with us all. Our condolences to their family, friends, and loved ones. **SFBG**

“I never expected to have the opportunity to travel for/from film. Traveling is a privilege, and not one that I take lightly.”

Alexis Tioseco

film and whenever airfare could be found. Rotterdam, Berlin, Oberhausen, Paris, and finally, Slovenia and Manila. In 2007 they had had enough of seeing one another only during festivals (there’s more to life than film, after all, but not much more). Nika visited Manila for two months (choosing July and August, a trial-by-fire or sweltering heat if ever there was one).

My wife and I visited them in mid-August of that year, staying with them at the Quezon City home now marked by tragedy. We have many wonderful memories of that time, all capped by Alexis’ and Nika’s amazing hospitality and friendship. We had only spent a few days together over the course of two years, but he treated us like long-time friends (something I would guess he has done to many people). We continued the bond over film. I

Jason Sanders is Film Research Associate at Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley. A version of this piece was first published in Filmmaker magazine’s blog at www.filmmakermagazine.com/blog/.

To read the full article from Alexis to Nika, visit *Rogue Magazine* at http://rogue.ph/columns/entry/the_letter_i_would_love_to_read_to_you_in_person/P1/

Alexis Tioseco’s Criticine website can be found at www.criticine.com, and his writing can also be found as www.alexistioseco.wordpress.com

MORE AT SFBG.COM

Find excerpts from Tioseco’s essay “Revolutions Happen Like Refrains in a Song.”

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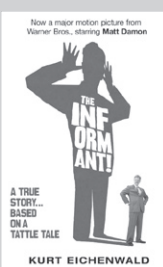
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IN THEATRES FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18



“Rialto’s Best of British Noir”

► **PREVIEW** That undisputed champ of repertory programming, film noir, is getting a good workout during otherwise sunny September. Elliot Lavine combs the Columbia vaults for a 22-film Roxie bonanza, while the Castro Theatre and Pacific Film Archive look across the pond for a touch of “tea and larceny.” Even if it’s disingenuous to label these Anglo entries as noir — the camera angles are right, the mannered scripts not so much — the down-and-out British crime films make for a fascinating mirror image to their American counterparts, not least for the visible evidence of World War II trauma. The rarity-heavy PFA series will better satisfy the buff, but only a fool would pass up a week’s worth of Rialto restoration prints at the Castro. Three of the five films are Graham Greene affairs, including a long-overdue re-release of *Brighton Rock* (1947). The real discovery of the series, however, is Robert Hamer’s *It Always Rains on Sunday* (1947), an unusual mélange of kitchen-sink drama, Dostoyevskian moral tale, and on-the-lam thriller. If the steady downpour is pure noir, the film’s narrative is less typical. Instead of concentrating trauma and repression into a single (male) figure, Hamer spreads it around an entire East London neighborhood. There is a escaped convict at the center of the story who looks every bit the seductive part, but in spite of a stylish chase finale, Hamer is more interested in the drab corners of ordinary deceit. His resourceful dramatizations of working class spaces — and specifically their lack of privacy — are consumed with an anxiety far in excess of the film’s serviceable plot. **(Max Goldberg)**

RIALTO’S BEST OF BRITISH NOIR Sept. 11–16, \$10. Castro Theatre, 429 Castro, SF. (415) 621-6120, www.thecastrotheatre.com

Film listings are edited by Cheryl Eddy. Reviewers are Kimberly Chun, Michelle Devereaux, Max Goldberg, Dennis Harvey, Johnny Ray Huston, Louis Peitzman, Lynn Rapoport, Ben Richardson, and Matt Sussman. The film intern is Laura Swanbeck. For rep house showtimes, see Rep Clock. For first-run showtimes, see Movie Guide. For complete film listings, including Ongoing reviews, see www.sfbg.com. Due to the Labor Day holiday, theater information was incomplete at presstime.

OPENING

► **Beeswax** See “Mind Your Own.” (1:40)

Broken Hill Raised in the Australian Outback, a Sydney-bound teen struggles to achieve his musical dreams, earn the love of his dream girl, please his father, etc. (1:42)

Cloud Nine German seamstress Inge (Ursula Werner) is happily married to Werner (Horst Rehlberg), but she’s conducting a passionate affair with Karl (Horst Westphal). There are clandestine trysts, skinny dip scenes, bathtub masturbations, steamy make-out sessions in the rain, longing gazes, and copious full-frontal nudity. Oh, and everyone mentioned above? Either pushing, or over, age 70. Whether or not you can handle that kind of actorly bravery will no doubt color your perception of Andreas Dresen’s *Cloud Nine*, which is otherwise a very bittersweet tale of late-in-life sexual awakenings, and the guilt that comes with infidelity at any age. (1:38) (Eddy)

Earth Days By now most of us have a basic

awareness of the urgent need to counter the damage we have done and are doing to our home planet. Robert Stone’s approach with *Earth Days* is to contextualize the current status of the struggle by accounting for the birth of the ecology movement, leading to the first Earth Day in 1970 that helped the movement congeal. We are introduced to a handful of prototypes, such as the “activist,” “motivator,” and “radical” who all become increasingly interesting as the film unravels various social and political factors. For example, “the biologist” Paul Ehrlich, whose controversial book, *The Population Bomb*, was instrumental when released in 1968, explains the way that most environmental issues are tied to overpopulation. Various conflicts are presented with incisiveness and insight, such as the confrontation between the Sierra Club and loggers and the outrage of the pesticide companies upon the release of Rachel Carson’s seminal *Silent Spring*. Clips of presidents as far to the right as Nixon delivering empty promises to reform our irresponsible ways helps drive home the need for grassroots change. (1:40) *Smith Rafael*. (Kevin Langson)

Evangelion 1.0: You Are (Not) Alone Long before Luke first learned of “the force” and Neo discovered he was “the One,” fantasy and science fiction works have peddled religious propaganda to eager audiences. Hideaki Anno’s animated *Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone* does one better — it dispenses with any attempt at veiled allusion and barges straight into wish-fulfillment fanboy territory. This second installment adapted from

the Japanese anime TV show chronicles the adventures of Shinji Ikari (voiced by Megumi Ogata), a 14-year old boy who is called by his father, a genius engineer, to defend a futuristic Tokyo from destructive “Angels.” To save the world from apocalypse, Shinji must pilot one of the Evangelions, a human-shaped weapons system, despite his complete and utter lack of training (not to mention his crippling fear of his father and his own abilities). Resembling an extended Saturday morning cartoon complete with cliffhanger, *Evangelion*, like many of its genre, wants to be an epic tale of faith, duty, and free will, but in wanting to encompass such thematic giants barely ends up skimming the surface. (1:38) *Sundance Kabuki*. (Swanbeck)

Hae Un Dae Yoon Je-Kyun’s disaster flick about a killer tsunami is already a huge hit in its native Korea. (2:10) *Marina*.
► **9** American animation rarely gets as dark and dystopian as the PG-13-rated 9, the first feature by Shane Acker, who dreamed up the original short. The end of the world has arrived, the cities are wastelands of rubble, and the machines — robots that once functioned as the *War of the Worlds*-like weapons of an evil dictator — have triumphed. Humans have been eradicated — or maybe not. Some other, more vulnerable, sock-puppet-like machines, concocted with a combination of alchemy and engineering, have been created to counter their scary toaster brethren, like 9 (voiced by Elijah Wood), who stumbles off his worktable like a miniature Pinocchio, a so-called stitch-punk. He’s big-eyed, bumbling, and vulnerable in his soft knitted skin and deprived of his guiding Geppetto. But he quickly encounters 2 (Martin Landau), who helps him jump start his nerves and fine-tune his voice box before a nasty, spidery ‘bot snatches his new friend up, as well a mysterious object 9 found at his creator’s lab. Too much knowledge in this ugly new world is something to be feared, as he learns from the other surviving models.

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their innocent, round eyes — die. Still, 9 manages to sidestep easy consolation and simple answers — delivering the always instructive lesson that argument and dialogue is just as vital and human as blowing stuff up real good
CONTINUES ON PAGE 52 »

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7:30 PM FILM MIX 2: DESTINATION UNKNOWN
PURSUING ESCAPE, TRANSITION AND FULFILLMENT.
9:30 PM FILM MIX 6: TRUTH AND DARE
FULL OF SHOCKS AND EXTREMES.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH

7:30 PM FILM MIX 1: FLIGHTS OF FANCY
LIGHT FUN WITH INNOCENCE, ANIMALS & FRIENDS.
9:30 PM FILM MIX 5: BLIGHT (QA)
EXPLORING URBAN BOUNDARIES.

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH

5:30 PM FILM MIX 5: BLIGHT
EXPLORING URBAN BOUNDARIES.
7:30 PM FILM MIX 3: IMBEDDED (QA)
ABOUT AMBITIONS AND FORTITUDE.
9:30 PM FILM MIX 4: HELLO MY NAME IS () (QA)
FILMS OF LOVE, LUST AND SEX.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH

3:30 PM FILM MIX 3: IMBEDDED
ABOUT AMBITIONS AND FORTITUDE.
5:30 PM FILM MIX 6: TRUTH AND DARE (QA)
FULL OF SHOCKS AND EXTREMES.
7:30 PM FILM MIX 1: FLIGHTS OF FANCY (QA)
LIGHT FUN WITH INNOCENCE, ANIMALS & FRIENDS.
9:30 PM FILM MIX 2: DESTINATION UNKNOWN (QA)
PURSUING ESCAPE, TRANSITION AND FULFILLMENT.

OPENING

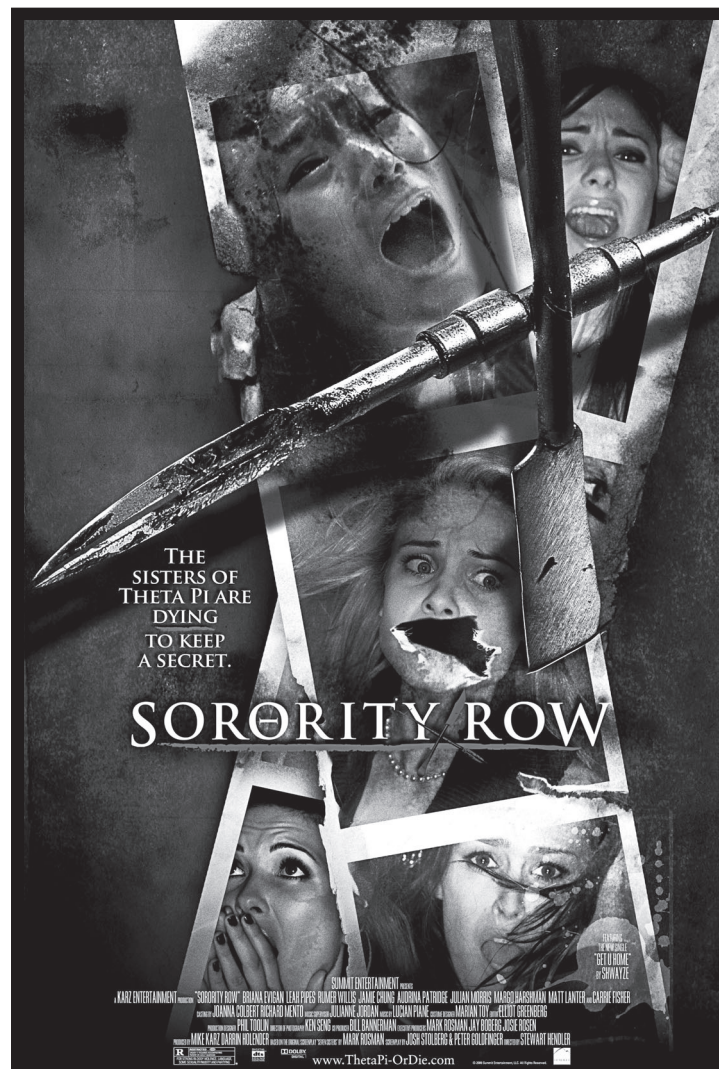
CONT>>

— while offering heroic, relatively complicated thrills. And yes, our heros do get to run for their little AI-enhanced lives from a massive fireball. (1:19) (Chun)

>> The September Issue The Lioness D'Wintour, the Devil Who Wears Prada, or the High Priestess of Condé Nast — it doesn't matter what you choose to call *Vogue* editor-in-chief Anna Wintour. If you're in the fashion industry, you *will* call her — or at least be amused by the power she wields as the overseer of style's luxury bible, then 700-plus pages strong for its legendary September fall fashion issue back in the heady days of '07, pre-Great Recession. But you don't have to be a publishing insider to be fascinated by director R.J. Cutler's frisky, sharp-eyed look at the making of fashion's fave editorial doorstep. Wintour's laser-gazed facade is humanized, as Cutler opens with footage of a sparkling-eyed editor breaking down fashion's fluffy reputation. He then follows her as she assumes the warrior pose in, say, the studio of Yves St. Laurent, where she has designer Stefano Pilati fluttering over his morose color choices, and in the offices of the magazine, where she slices, dices, and kills photo shoots like a sartorial samurai. Many of the other characters at *Vogue* (like OTT columnist André Leon Talley) are given mere cameos, but Wintour finds a worthy adversary-compatriot in creative direc-

tor Grace Coddington, another Englishwoman and ex-model — the red-tressed, pale-as-a-wraith Pre-Raphaelite dreamer to Wintour's well-armored knight. The two keep each other honest and craftily ingenious, and both the magazine and this doc benefit. (1:28) (Chun) **Silhouette City** Named for an urban-warfare training camp established by radical Christian group the Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord in the 1980s, Michael W. Wilson's doc traces a historical thru-line from that group to apocalypse-anticipating 21st century Evangelicals. They've come a long way from simply isolating themselves in the backwoods with weapons stockpiles; these days, they're in positions of political power, or are best-selling authors, or oversee enormous congregations. In some cases, they're all three at once. The first act of *Silhouette City* is full of vintage footage of the Covenant, the Sword, and the Arm of the Lord's culty goings-on, which are so fascinating that Wilson probably could've made an entire documentary on just that subject, especially with former church member Kerry Noble as a featured talking head. But Wilson is more interested in pointing a finger at contemporary religious fanatics, incorporating quite a lot of footage pulled from CNN and other news broadcasts, as well as segments on BattleCry (a massive, teen-targeted convention for the born-again set) and an exploration of how the United States military is often biased against non-Christians. But though Wilson gives quick mention to the McCain-Palin ticket's religious undertones, *Silhouette City* can't help but feel


a bit dated now that George W. Bush is out of office. It'd be interesting to see a follow-up doc charting the movement's activities today, which are no doubt just as fervent and probably a lot more secretive. (1:28) *Roxie*. (Eddy) **Sorority Row** Audrina Patridge gets offed. *J'accuse* Justin Bobby! (1:32) **Tony Manero** From the dark, twisted mind of director Pablo Larrain comes the unsettling story of Raul Peralta (Alfredo Castro), a washed-up, disco-dancing fanatic obsessed with winning a Tony Manero look-alike contest. Too busy impersonating the hip-swiveling star of *Saturday Night Fever* (1977) to see the political oppression that surrounds him, Raul prefers instead to spend his time practicing his dance routine and wreaking havoc in attempt to achieve his pipe dream. Creating a striking parallel between Raul and Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, Larrain's *Saturday Night* sociopath's violent streak and abysmal behavior includes beating up an old lady, defecating on the pristine suit of a competitor, and clubbing a film projectionist who has the nerve to play *Grease* (1978) instead of, you guessed it, *Saturday Night Fever*. Chilling and wrenching to watch (made more so by Larrain's decision to align the audience's perspective with such a soulless aggressor), this macabre film also serves as a cautionary tale of how easy it is to become desensitized to violence and fall prey to force-fed and self-imposed propaganda. (1:38) *Sundance Kabuki*. (Swanbeck) **Tyler Perry's I Can Do Bad All By Myself** Taraji P. Henson and Madea, together again. (1:53)



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IN THEATERS ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11!

Whiteout Antarctic-set horror flick starring Kate Beckinsale. Judging by the trailer, she takes at least one totally gratuitous shower. (1:41)

A Woman in Berlin A rape victim struggles to survive during the Red Army's postwar occupation of Berlin. (2:11)

REP PICKS

▶ **"Rialto's Best of British Noir"** See pick box. *Castro*.

▶ **"SF Shorts: The San Francisco International Festival of Short Films"**

Though the entries at the San Francisco International Festival of Short Films may be small in scale, the scope of cinematic creativity is anything but. Showcasing contemplative documentaries, short-and-sweet comedies, and compact human interest stories, this year's festival debuts an impressive selection of 50 of the best local and international short films around. Several standouts include *Fast As She Can*, about female athletes in Jamaica trying to make the Olympics amid a background of poverty and violence; and the beautiful black and white *Close to Home*, about the impact that a beloved son's death can have on a family and a community. Another highlight from abroad is *Andheri*, the story of a live-in maid in Mumbai who finally runs away after years of emotional abuse and strikes up an unexpected friendship on board a bus. Signified by a man and a woman donning a single pair of shorts in the promotional materials, this provocative festival encourages filmmakers to push boundaries and challenges its audience to experience walking around for a while in someone else's shoes, or shorts, as the case may be. *Red Vic*. (Swanbeck)

▶ **"Top Bill: The Films of William Klein"** See "A Time to Love." *Pacific Film Archive*. **SFBG**

first run venues

The following is contact information for Bay Area first-run theaters. Please go to sfbg.com for a complete list of showtimes.

Balboa 38th Ave/Balboa. 221-8184, www.bal-boamovies.com.

Bridge Geary/Blake. 267-4893.

Century Plaza Noor off El Camino, South SF. (650) 742-9200.

Century 20 Junipero Serra/John Daly, Daly City. (650) 994-7469.

Clay Fillmore/Clay. 267-4893.

Embarcadero Center Cinema 1 Embarcadero Center, promenade level. 267-4893.

Empire West Portal/Vicente. 661-2539.

Four Star Clement/23rd Ave. 666-3488.

Kabuki Cinema Post/Fillmore. 929-4650.

Lumiere California/Polk. 267-4893.

Marina Theatre 2149 Chestnut. www.lntsf.com/marina_theatre

Metreon Fourth St/Mission. 1-800-FANDANGO.

Metro Union/Webster. 931-1685.

1000 Van Ness 1000 Van Ness. 1-800-231-3307.

Opera Plaza Van Ness/Golden Gate. 267-4893.

Presidio 2340 Chestnut. 776-2388.

SF Centre Mission between Fourth and Fifth sts. 538-8422.

Stonestown 19th Ave/Winston. 221-8182.

Vogue Sacramento/Presidio. 221-8183.

OAKLAND

Grand Lake 3200 Grand, Oakl. (510) 452-3556.

Jack London Stadium 100 Washington, Jack London Square, Oakl. (510) 433-1320.

Parkway 1834 Park, Oakl. (510) 814-2400.

Piedmont Piedmont/41st St, Oakl. (510) 464-5980.

BERKELEY AREA

Albany 1115 Solano, Albany. (510) 464-5980.

AMC Bay Street 16 5614 Shellmound, Emeryville. (510) 457-4262.

California Kittredge/Shattuck, Berk. (510) 464-5980.

Cerrito 10070 San Pablo, El Cerrito. (510) 972-9102.

Emery Bay 6330 Christie, Emeryville. (510) 420-0107.

Oaks 1875 Solano, Berk. (510) 526-1836.

Orinda 4 Orinda Theater Square, Orinda. (510) 254-9060.

Rialto Cinemas Elmwood 2966 College Ave. at Ashby, Berk. (510) 433-9730.

Shattuck Cinemas 2230 Shattuck, Berk. (510) 464-5980.

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*** SHATTUCK:** Fri 9/11: Q&A with Executive Director, Martin Bourque Ecology Center after the 7:15pm show
Sat 9/12 - Q&A with Director, Robert Stone, after the 4:40pm show

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Wednesday, September 16th

April Flores' Love Toy Art Show

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Schedules are for Wed/9–Tues/15 except where noted. Director and year are given when available. Double features are marked with a •. All times are p.m. unless otherwise specified.

AMNESIA 853 Valencia, SF; www.amnesiath-bar.com. \$8. "Good Vibrations" Fourth Annual Independent Erotic Film Festival: Blue Movie Night," hosted by Dr. Carol Queen, Sun, 9.

BALBOA THEATER 3630 Balboa, SF; www.thrillville.net. \$12. "Thrillville's Lucha Beach Party:" •Santo and Blue Demon vs. the Monsters (1969) and Wrestling Women vs. the Aztec Mummy (1964), Thurs, 7:30. Program repeats Sept 17, 7:30 p.m., Camera 3 Cinema, 288 S. Second St, San Jose.

BAY MODEL 2100 Bridgeway, Sausalito; www.tiburonfilmfestival.com. Free. Tiburon Film Society presents: **Legacy of the Great Aletsch** (Brandestini and Ellington), Tues, 6.

CASTRO 429 Castro, SF; (415) 621-6120, www.castrotheatre.com. \$5-10. **Mary Poppins** (Stevenson, 1964), Wed-Thurs, 7. Presented sing-along style; these shows, \$10-15. "Rialto's Best of British Noir:" •Brighton Rock (Boulting, 1947), Fri-Sat, 7 (also Sat, 3), and **The Third Man** (Reed, 1949), Fri-Sat, 8:55 (also Sat, 1, 4:55); •It Always Rains on Sunday (Hamer, 1947), Sun, 3:20, 7, and Brighton Rock (Boulting, 1947), Sun, 1:30, 5:10, 8:55; •Peeping Tom (Powell, 1960), Mon, 7, and It Always Rains on Sunday (Hamer, 1947), Mon, 9; •The Fallen Idol (Reed, 1948), Tues, 7, and Peeping Tom (Powell, 1960), Tues, 9.

CENTER FOR SEX AND CULTURE 1519 Mission,

SF; http://sexandculture.org. \$10. "Good Vibrations" Fourth Annual Independent Erotic Film Festival:" **BDSM: It's Not What You Think** (Palmquist), Tues, 7:30.

CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER 1118 Fourth St, San Rafael; (415) 454-1222, www.cafilm.org. \$6.50-10. **The Baader Meinhof Complex** (Edel, 2008), call for dates and times. **Still Walking** (Kore-eda, 2008), call for dates and times. **Empress Hotel** (Light and Saraf, 2009), Wed, 7. **Earth Days** (Stone, 2009), Sept 11-17, call for times.

"FILM NIGHT IN THE PARK" This week: Central Field, Broadway at Bank, Fairfax; (415) 453-4333, www.filmnight.org. \$3-6. **Rushmore** (Anderson, 1998), Sat, 8.

GRAND LAKE THEATER 3200 Grand, Oak; www.communitycurrency.org/filmfestival2009.html. \$10. "9/11 Film Festival: Raising Questions, Demanding Answers," Wed, 6:15; Thurs, noon.

HUMANIST HALL 390 27th St, Oak; www.humanisthall.org. \$5. **Solar Energy: Saved by the Sun**, Wed, 7:30.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE 57 Post, SF; (415) 393-0100. \$10. "CinemaLit Film Series: The Luck of the Irish:" **The Commitments** (Parker, 1991), Fri, 6:30.

PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE 2575 Bancroft, Berk; (510) 642-5249, www.bampfa.berkeley.edu. \$5.50-9.50. **Always Been a Rambler** (Aginsky, 2009), Wed, 7. With live music. "Tea and Larceny: Classic British Crime Films:" **The Snorkel** (Green, 1958), Thurs, 6:30; **Noose** (Greville, 1948), Thurs, 8:20; **So Evil My Love** (Allen, 1948), Fri, 8:40; **The October Man** (Baker, 1947), Sat, 6:30. "Top Bill: The Films of William Klein:" **Muhammad Ali, the Greatest** (1974), Fri, 6:30; **Who Are You, Polly**

Magoo? (1966), Sat, 8:40; **Pan-African Cultural Festival** (1969), Sun, 5. "Another Border: Films and Videos from the Cinematheque de Tanger Archives:" "(Hi)story Tellers" (1935-2001), shorts program, Sun, 3. **Power Trip** (Tomeoni, 2007), Mon, 7. To RSVP to this screening, email meoproducts@hotmail.com. "Alternative Visions:" **Portrait of Jason** (Clarke, 1967), Tues, 7:30.

RED VIC 1727 Haight, SF; (415) 668-3994. \$6-10. "SF Shorts: The San Francisco International Festival of Short Films:" "Program 2," Wed, 7:30 and Sat, 9:30; "Program 6," Wed, 9:30 and Sat, 5:30; "Program 1," Thurs and Sat, 7:30; "Program 5," Thurs, 9:30 and Fri, 5:30; "Program 3," Fri, 7:30 and Sat, 3:30; "Program 4," Fri, 9:30. **Unmistaken Child** (Baratz, 2008), Sun-Mon, 7:15, 9:20 (also Sun, 2, 4:30). **\$9.99** (Rosenthal, 2008), Sept 15-16, 7:15, 9:15 (also Sept 15, 2).

EL RIO 3158 Mission, SF; www.elriosf.com. \$7. "Good Vibrations" Fourth Annual Independent Erotic Film Festival Kick-Off Party," with film screenings and burlesque performances, Sat, 9.

ROXIE 3117 and 3125 16th St, SF; (415) 863-1087, www.roxie.com. \$5-10. **Bliss** (Oguz, 2007), Wed-Thurs, 7, 9.

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin, SF; www.sfpl.org. Free. "Samurai Without Swords: Western Variations on a Japanese Theme:" **A Fistful of Dollars** (Leone, 1966), Thurs, noon. Large-screen video presentation.

YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS 701 Mission, SF; (415) 978-2787; www.ybca.org. \$8-10. **Bigger than Life** (Ray, 1956), Thurs and Sat, 7:30pm; Sun, 2pm. **SFBG**

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No gag

By **Andrea Nemerson**
andrea@mail.altsexcolumn.com

Andrea is currently on vacation. This column originally ran in June 2006.

Dear Andrea:

About getting past my gag reflex while giving blow jobs: I have no idea of what's the best way to practice this. I've tried bananas, but honestly that was just weird. I never bothered trying to deep-throat my ex because he was happy with a hand job. The new boyfriend has expressed much interest in it, and I think trying to deep-throat without practice first would be really awful. Any books on this? Recommended dildos? Anything?

*Love,
Willing but Worried*

Dear Will:

Indeed, but first let's get our terms straight: Are you conflating the standard-issue blow job with the X-treme sport called "deep-throating" (taking the penis all the way into the throat), or has the boyfriend specifically requested the latter? "Deep-throating" has long had its place in the lexicon, but it has not replaced and ought not to replace "blow job," "giving head," or "going down on." They are not at all the same thing.

If all you two are interested in is mouth-penis contact, you shouldn't need a textbook or a night of, you should pardon the expression, "cramming." You can practice a bit with nothing fancier or more banana-flavored than your own finger or a Popsicle stick, just to determine how far back you can tolerate an oral foreign body before you need to expel it.

It does get easier with practice. Once you graduate to the real thing, you will find that the more

control you take over the process (you do the moving, he just lies there being happy he has a penis), the less gaggy you will feel. If it still feels overly intrusive or out of control, wrap your hand (spit into it generously first, as though sealing a bargain) around the base and move this in concert with your mouth. Some men can easily detect the difference but many don't care — friction is friction, after all, and warm, wet, and deep are usually good enough without having to get all picky about it. Most men enjoy a blow job, period, and few — I cannot say "none," but let's not get distracted by the corner cases — get off on making girls gag or produce involuntary Roman showers.

You may find, in time, that you really can control your gag reflex. The feedback provided by a real live boyfriend, though, in the form of appreciative gasps and groans, is a motivator the likes of which mere plastic, no matter how colorful, will never achieve. Not, at any rate, with today's technology. Androids and replicants haven't yet started rolling off the assembly lines and into our toy boxes.

One last word of warning: Yes, there can be a somewhat unpleasant surprise at the end of a successful blow job. Inform him that he is responsible for early warning and withdrawal, no "whoopsies" allowed. This probably ought to be considered nonnegotiable at the beginning, subject to later review.

*Love,
Andrea*

See Andrea's other column at carnalnation.com

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